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A Tale of a Town: Artists Crafting "The Creative Class"

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A TALE OF A TOWN: ARTISTS CRAFTING "THE CREATIVE CLASS"

A Dissertation Presented

by

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DEDICATION

To Maria, my lovely wife.

Serendipity inconspicuously put me in propinquity. Thus, epiphany

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The ideas in this dissertation unfolded from a long journey that started before I came to grad school: Can a community come together to make it a better place? This is the question that resonated in my head since my youth in Mexico and, since then, I have been moving through a path intended to answer it. This path has been filled with excitements that kept me going and frustrations that held me true to myself. Throughout this time many people helped me to shape the ideas behind the document and to growth as a person. At this point, it is with much gratitude that I acknowledge the people who have supported and encouraged me in this adventure during the last part of the journey: my dissertation work.

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ABSTRACT

A TALE OF A TOWN: ARTISTS CRAFTING "THE CREATIVE CLASS"

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This dissertation presents an alternative understanding to current works exploring the creative class. Extant views of the creative class portray it as a concentration of individuals and organizations producing clusters of interconnected cultural activities fostering positive socioeconomic change in the communities where they are located. By contrast, this dissertation articulates the creative class as time evolving geographical organizing of networked creative individuals whose presence over time in a community may or may not foster positive socioeconomic change. The creative class is thus conceptualized as contingent and continuously evolving processes whose emergence at any one point in time may or may not be sustainable over time.

Framed theoretically through a nexus between strategic management, economic geography, and economic sociology, the unfolding of a creative class is explored as location specific phenomenon illustrating mutually co-constructing processes of organizations and their environment. It focuses –as its exemplar- on local socioeconomic processes enacted by an assortment of artists and artisans in a small New England (USA) former mill town.

A case study was derived from data collected for over four years in fieldwork through a multi-method approach. Underpinned by interpretative notions, methodology included participative ethnography and social network analyses, where quantitative and qualitative data functioned in a complementary way. Exploring relationships between artists and artisans and their organizing attempts to become members of the community, observations focused on mundane situations through which these processes were enacted. Social network methodologies contributed to mapping processual linkages between community members, while further ethnographic work contextualized relationships uncovered through social network analyses.

The resulting case study presents a narrative about the unfolding of a potential creative class as dynamic bottom-up phenomenon whose socioeconomic consequences cannot be guaranteed by formal planning. Artists and artisans struggle to become a community of creative practice and become acknowledged as such by their neighbors when their organizing opens up socioeconomic change. These processes, which may lead to a sustainable cultural economy in this location, are not independent or exogenous to the place. They are part of the local history, influenced by shared and ongoing socioeconomic processes, and specific to locality.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: THE CREATIVE CLASS?

Alfred Marshall's seminal work, *Principles of Economics* (1890), was the first book to introduce a vivid and dynamic description of the socioeconomic phenomenon commonly referred to as the "creative class" (Florida, 2002a; Myers, 2004; Oehler, Sheppard, & Benjamin, 2006a; Phillips, 2004; Pozzolo, 2005; Sommer, 2005). As a contemporary observer of the birth of the industrial revolution in England, Marshall described how members of the "creative class" (e.g., scientists, artisans, artists, handcrafters and entrepreneurs) came together in a geographically contiguous and delimited space to attain individual gains, while sharing communal benefits through a local social network.

Marshall's contribution, however, was not to discuss the processes fostering a locally embedded "creative class," nor the role of organizations and individuals in these processes. Marshall's contribution was to report the geographical agglomeration of business and creative and inventive individuals with positive economic outcomes for the host community. Thus, he focused on two interrelated premises: the locally restricted, yet communally shared, availability of know-how and the neighboring presence of a unique mix of resources. As such, his work, while taking for granted the presence of a creative class and its relationship to local positive economic effects, described a newly emerged socioeconomic structure. These processes, Marshall (1890) further argued in Book IV Chapter X, were only attainable because of the unique organizational structures

and socioeconomic environment of these particular spaces, where the secrets of the trade were "in the air."

Contemporary equivalents of these nineteenth century industrial revolution scenarios have now become synonymous with *industrial districts* or *clusters* (Alberti, 2004; McDonald & Belussi, 2002). By exploring several instances of this phenomenon Michael Best (2001), in his book *The New Competitive Advantage,* suggested that clusters and their positive regional development effects were the outcomes of a networked population of interacting specialist business enterprises vested in innovation. Similar propositions have been advanced by other scholars in the fields of economic geography and management. At the core of these works are two primary research agendas:

a) To determine the strategic value for organizations to be located within a *cluster,* or, more specifically, the inherent competitive advantage of tapping the cluster's "business environment" (Bagella & Becchetti, 2000; Beaudry & Breschi, 2003; Best, 2001; Kuah, 2002; Markusen, 1996b; Porter, 1998a, 1998b, 2000; Rosenfeld, 1997; Saxenian, 1994), and
b) To probe the link between *clusters* and regional economic development, or, more specifically, the socioeconomic benefits harvested by communities endowed within clusters (e.g., Adams, 2003; Asheim, 1996, 1997; Aydalot, 1986; Best, 2001; Dorfman, 1983; Ettlinger, 2001; Feser & Bergman, 2000; Floysand & Jakobsen, 2001; Harrison, 1992; Krugman, 1995; Morosini, 2004; NGA Report, 2002; Porter, 1998c; Scott, 1988).

Currently, cluster-related research has systematically focused on the *ex-post* linking of clusters with regional economic development and clusters with individual and organizational success including clusters of creative individuals. For instance, in 2007, De Natale and Wassall (2007) illustrated the importance of a local "creative class" in the existence of a cluster. Their study focused on New England's cultural industries and workforce. In another, Phillips (2004) stated that the arts could be used as a tool for community economic development. Therefore, the creative class is seen as the economic engine for business agglomerations and economic regional development (Florida, 2002a). However, the nature of the processes leading to a creative class formation has remained largely unattended. It is this issue that I attempt to explore in this dissertation.

The Creative Class

What (or who) is the "creative class"? At the annual luncheon of Tucson Regional Economic Opportunities Inc, Florida (2007:1) described the creative class as people who are "smart, artistic, energetic and usually self-directed. They don't move because they were told to move. They move because a place feels right […]. And when they move to a place, they make things happen — both for themselves and the community". With this statement, he summarized the conceptual ideas behind the work that popularized the use of the creative class term. Yet, who exactly are these people? And how do they become "a class"? To test for his ideas, Florida (2002a) defined his research boundaries of creative class using industry coding descriptions of economic occupations. He divided them into creative class (split into super-creative core and creative professionals), working class, service class and agriculture. Because of its immediate link to public policy and regional planning, this industry coding

operationalization became synonymous with "creative class", effectively replacing "smart, artistic, energetic and usually self-directed" individuals driving socioeconomic processes affecting local communities. Some argued that this operationalization placed the focus on the economic description of a highly lumped conglomerate of individuals with high educational attainment within a particular profession (Markusen, 2005). To correct for this misrepresentation, the same critic offered an updated operationalization of the term using Florida's original work. This revised argument centers on individuals' attributes and preferences as well as on the "actual meaning" of their professional endeavors. Nevertheless, this alternative representation still used aggregated data to report comparative indexes rather than focusing on the actions and processes of members of the so-called creative class.

Another research perspective on the creative class was advanced in the field of economic geography by Gibson and Kong (2005). In their critical review of cultural economy covering works in economic and cultural geography, sociology, media and communication studies, urban planning and economics, these authors described the earlier discussed popular use of the creative class concept as an index of the cultural economy –economic outcomes linked to creative and/or cultural endeavors. As such they argued that "[t]he difficulty with this approach is a tendency to be reductionistic in the interpretation of culture" (Gibson & Kong, 2005:545-546). Yet, they acknowledged and concurred with the importance of orthodox empirical/descriptive research in the area of cultural economy if "balance between agendas focused on generalization of macroscale trends (without boosterish or self-fulfilling jargon), and attention to the complexities of interscalar processes and relations" is sought (Gibson & Kong, 2005:557).

Following from this latter critical view, my project seeks to explore the original notion of the creative class starting by breaking away from its use –and operationalization– as a reductive index of cultural economies. Re-framing the creative class as interscalar processes of relationships among local cultural agents, this project focuses –as its exemplar- on local socioeconomic processes undertaken by an assortment of artists and artisans in a small New England (USA) former mill town where I conducted research for over four years. Specifically, I operationalize the creative class processes as the collision of culture and economy –as suggested by Gibson and Kong (2005)– and, from this perspective, I observe artists and artisans as exemplar agents of culture, and their actions in the community as collisions of culture and economy.

More generally, this project is about the unfolding of a "creative class" as an illustration of mutually co-constructing processes of organizations and their environment. To this effect, my argument departs from popularized versions of the "creative class" phenomenon as expressed by Florida and others following his work. While conventional perspectives represent the creative class through a realist ontology (i.e., assume its a priori existence), my work articulates it as a socially constructed ontology (i.e., as ongoing processes of social understandings and dynamics). Further, conventional work approaches the creative class through positivist epistemologies (i.e., as something to be found and measured), while my work approaches it through phenomenological and processual epistemologies (i.e., must be studied as it unfolds from the actors' point of view). Finally, generally accepted views pose the creative class as an archetypical image of the concurrence, in time and space, of creative individuals, good organizations and good environments which once they have come together may guarantee sustainable

economic development in that location. In contrast, I advance that the creative class is a contingent and continuously evolving process whose emergence at any one point in time may or may not be sustainable over time, regardless of the quality of participants, existent organizations, and environmental conditions at the time of their concurrence. In fact, I argue that these are not distinctive entities that exist a priori, but that they co-construct each other through socioeconomic processes in particular spaces over time.

At the core of these discussed differences are underlying premises about where the creative class resides, who is a member of this class, and what is the value of this class for a community. In regards to place, traditional views pose the creative class' location as an ecosystem dominated by talent, tolerance and technology (Florida, 2002a). These local attributes, it is argued, serve to attract, cultivate and mobilize creative people. Hence it is presumed that only large cities are capable of pampering, catering and hosting these individuals who are, in its large majority wealthy yet in pursue of large incomes to help them sustain a lavish lifestyle. As they are assumed to be economically well established they are portrayed as naturally occupying power centers yet unable to consciously influence the society they lead as they are too disparate (often times self-centered) to be herded together. In all, this image serves to strengthen the intrinsic value of the creative class as composed of independent individuals who bring positive local economic impact if appropriately managed.

In contrast with the above view, this project presumes the creative class(es) to be as unique as the location where they unfold, thus accepting the possibility of having multiple "ecosystems" for there may be multiple types of creative classes (Asheim & Hansen, 2009). Hence, large cities are no longer a necessary condition for a creative

class to appear. Furthermore members of a local creative class may be capable to consciously influencing the community they live in as they may be a cohesive group –or at least act together upon, for instance, common lifestyle, economic, as well as non-economic interests. In this context, the local value of the creative class in their communities may not only be economic but social as well (Granovetter, 1985).

In short, extant views of the creative class portray it as a concentration of individuals (and organizations) engaged in constant exchanges that form into functional as well as spatial production clusters of interconnected cultural activities. These activities foster a positive socioeconomic change in the community where they are located. My work, by contrast, assumes that the creative class is a time evolving geographical organizing of networked creative individuals whose presence over time in the community where they live and/or work may (or may not) foster positive socioeconomic change.

Significance of the Project

Mirroring Marshall's original agenda, the current impetus of research exploring the relevance of the creative class for socioeconomic development of urban settings advances evidence highlighting the link between an above-average geographical concentration of creative individuals with a large agglomeration of businesses and as an improved local quality of life (e.g. Florida, 2002a). Other works have presented the value of a creative economy (i.e., an economy fueled by a creative class), by showcasing clusters of creativity and/or creative individuals (e.g., Florida, 2004; Lee, Leyshon, & Williams, 2003; Myers, 2004; Phillips, 2004; Pozzolo, 2005; Sommer, 2005).

According to these views, creative class, cultural economy, creative economy, and cultural industries are all terms which describe "a space where the culture and economic

collides" (Gibson & Kong, 2005:542). They are strategic places to establish organizations (Bagella & Becchetti, 2000; Florida, 2002a, 2002b, 2004; Kuah, 2002; Sorenson, 2003). They also promote the geographical clustering of knowledge-based and creativity-related enterprises (e.g., Asheim & Isaksen, 1997; Emerine, Shenot, Bailey, Sobel, & Susman, 2006; Markusen, 1996; Oehler *et al.*, 2006a; Porter, 1995, 2000, 2003; Yeung, 1998). Examples of these spaces, characterized by an above-average concentration of knowledge and creativity, paired with the opportunities and means that allows locals to exploit these conditions in exchange for socioeconomic benefits, can be found in cities such as Austin (Texas, US), San Francisco (California, US), Seattle (Washington, US), Boston (Massachusetts, US) [See Florida (2002a) and MacDonald & Belussi (2002) for an extended list of locations].

Despite growing evidence of the importance of the "creative class", current research has merely focused on reporting its presence, not questioning how it "appeared" in the first place (e.g., Asheim & Hansen, 2009; Florida, 2002a, 2002b, 2004; Lorenzen & Andersen, 2009), or presenting it as a different kind of self-contained cluster not as part of a larger process which may include the clustering of other organizations within the same geographical space (e.g., DeNatale & Wassall, 2007; Phillips, 2004).

Regardless of the research agenda, work in this area has been limited to *ex-post* analyses contrasting past and present quantifiable conditions (e.g., Austrian, 2000; Brusco, 1990; Colgan & Baker, 2003; Florida, 2002a; Lechner & Dowling, 1999; McDonald & Belussi, 2002; NGA Report, 2002; Porter, 1998b). These studies illustrate that "evident" and "quantifiable" differences are the "natural" outcome of the activities undertaken by the members of the creative class. Accordingly, changes in local

conditions, such as an increase in diversity and/or a drastic increment in the number of locally available entertainment venues, are argued to be indicators of the existence of a local creative class (Florida, 2002a, 2004) and are not explored as moments in time of an evolving process. Positive transformations associated with an improved quality of life, local socioeconomic vibrancy and flourishing business (Becattini, 1978; Best, 2001; Briggs, 2005; Porter, 1995), are understood to be available on command by replicating the surroundings of locations where desirable settings are the "natural" state of affairs (e.g., Best, 2001; Emerine *et al.*, 2006; Menzel & Fornahl, 2006; NGA Report, 2002; Oehler *et al.*, 2006a)..

Altogether, the literature has emphasized macro-level events in explaining the presence of geographic clusters of members of the creative class (e.g., DeNatale & Wassall, 2007; Florida, 2002a, 2004). For instance, in economic geography this has been accentuated by the treatment of urban hierarchies and rank sizing distribution of cities where small populations –tails in the urban distribution analysis– are not included (Lorenzen & Andersen, 2009). The local processual micro-level events possibly leading to the presence or lack of these desirable macro-conditions go largely unnoticed (Wooldridge, Calás, & Osorio, 2005). Empirical work is framed by the proverbial 'eureka,' where local macro-level images are matched to prevailing empirical and theoretical pre-conceptions (e.g., DeNatale & Wassall, 2007; Florida, 2002a, 2002b, 2004).

It is in this context that this dissertation presents an alternative understanding to current works exploring the creative class. While this project accepts the existence of clusters of creative individuals and their impact on local communities and business, as

proposed by Florida (2002a, 2002b, 2004, 2005) and others (e.g., Gibson & Kong, 2005; Oehler *et al.*, 2006a; Oehler, Sheppard, Benjamin, & Li, 2006b; Phillips, 2004; Pouder & St John, 1996; Sommer, 2005) it does not take them for granted. Instead, this work explores the possible organizing of individuals into a creative class capable of shaping localities, including their socioeconomic structures. Hence, creative class, in this work, is understood as an emergent socioeconomic organizing process part and parcel of local events leading to, rather than being either cause or effect of, socioeconomic change.

Research Question

To this effect, this dissertation is framed by the following general research question: ***How do local organizing processes structure geographically bound and delimited creative class clusters?*** To answer this question, I aim to understand the organizing practices of creative individuals located within a geographically contiguous space. As such, this project seeks to bridge micro, meso, and macro levels of organizing including organizing between individuals, across organizations and between individuals and organizations. Hence, I will explore how geographical agglomeration of organizations and individuals often identified as a creative class, is a process that unfolds over time and may or may not be sustained.

Theoretical Framework

I frame this research through a nexus between strategic management, economic geography and economic sociology to explore the unfolding of a creative class as location specific urban agglomeration phenomenon shaping, and shaped by, local social networks. In this context the strategic management lens pays attention to the organization-environment phenomena to explain how –and why– organizations may

cluster as they compete and seek to survive (Hitt & Ireland, 1985; Porter, 1998c; Porter, 2000). Likewise economic sociology enriches the analysis as it conceptualizes clustering processes as socially embedded networking phenomena (Granovetter, 1985; Putnam, 1995; Zukin & DiMaggio, 1990). The economic geography perspective brings relevance to location, distribution and spatial organization of the socioeconomic actors engaged in these clustering and networking processes (Gibson & Kong, 2005; Yeung, 1998, 2005b).

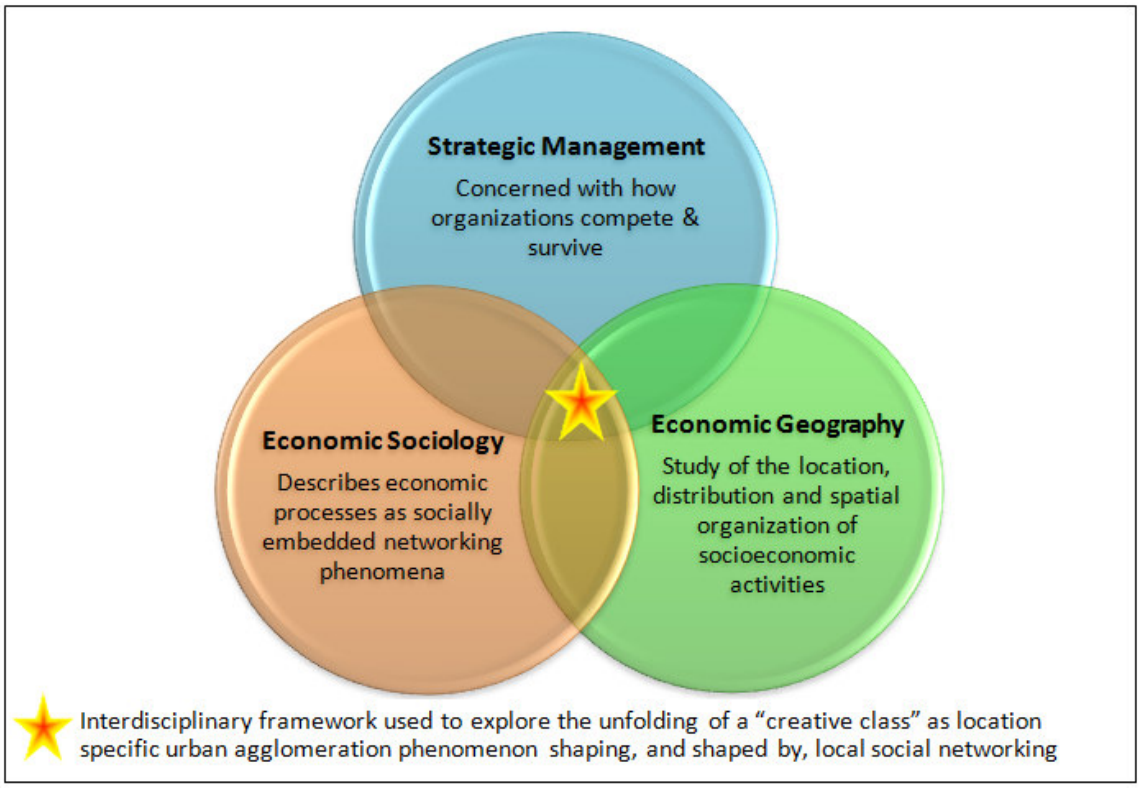


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework of this Project –Intersection of Strategic Management, Economic Sociology & Economic Sociology

Strategic Management

The field of strategic management seeks to understand how organizations become –and stay– competitive. Borrowing from economic geography, strategic management acknowledges the uneven geographical distribution of resources. As such the underlying

premise is that some places are better suited for business than others –and as a consequence clustering may happen. In this context strategic management seeks to explore and take advantage of the organization–environment relationship to ensure the survival of organizations (Hitt & Ireland, 1985; Hoskisson, Hitt, Wan, & Yiu, 1999). Research about the ideal business environment have studied elements, traditionally identified as attributes of a creative class as originally introduced by Marshall (1890) when describing the Lancashire industrial district. These elements include positive industries dynamics (Hill & Brennan, 2000; Porter, 1980), clusters (Porter, 1980), innovation (Baptista & Swann, 1998; Porter, 2000), competitive advantage (Porter, 1998c), entrepreneurship (Kuah, 2002; Lechner & Dowling, 1999), and knowledge spillovers (Baptista & Swann, 1998; Porter, 2000); all of them crucial for the success of an organization.

While research in strategic management have kept its focus on the Marshallian attributes, the perspectives have changed over time becoming more sophisticated. These works have progressively paid attention to higher and higher levels of analysis as organization-environment conceptualizations become more and more complex and attention has shifted to synergies and interactions. At first it was presumed that organization and environment were two independent elements and were represented as two distinctive phenomena. The research interest at this point was to understand the organization as a unit and business strategies spoke of competition among firms [e.g., Strategy & Structure (Chandler, 1962) Best practices, (Ansoff, 1965), Markets vs. Hierarchies (Williamson, 1975), Firm Resources (Barney, 1991; Penrose, 1995)]. Later, attention was given to industries as structures of competing firms. Works on this area

explored how these structures affected the firms' ability to outperform competitors. The strategic focus was to identify the advantageous positioning of the firm within the industry's dynamics [Five Forces (Porter, 1980, 1985), Structure-Conduct-Performance (S-C-P) paradigm (Bain, 1956, 1968; Mason, 1939)]. In this context it was eventually advanced that firms within industries tend to group (Newman, 1978; Porter, 1979). More sophisticated perspectives building on the "grouping" concept eventually focused on the relationships among multiple firms and conceptualized them as clusters evolving from the strategies endeavors of tacit collaboration (Porter, 1998a, 1998b; Porter, 1998c). These last perspectives opened the door to understanding geographically bound socioeconomic dynamics. Recent works, taking an even higher level of analysis, do not just look at firms as part of a larger assembly but explore the relationships between groups of firms to explain firms' dynamics –and strategies– as embedded in a collaborative Multi-Firm Network shaped by the relationship between organizations and environment. These arguments efface distinctions between organizations and environments while looking at groups of organizations in relationships to each other (Miles, Miles, & Snow, 2005). Business strategies in this context are explicit in actively searching after multifirm collaborations.

These latter arguments reiterate Marshall's original premises where business and individuals in geographical proximity were described as entities that share knowledge and perform, through implicit and explicit collaborations, as a single unit called industrial district (Marshall, 1890). This ultimately "old" view of the organization and its environment echoes the more recent idea that "environments are enacted through the social construction and interaction processes of organized actors" (Smircich & Stubbart,

1985:724). Hence, framing strategic management as the processual –and collective– enactment of environment and organizations opens the door to explore the creative class as a strategic enactment of clustered organizations and individuals.

Economic Sociology

By describing economic dynamics as socially embedded phenomenon, economic sociology has framed a new understanding of organizing processes (Granovetter, 1985, 1991; Granovetter & Swedberg, 1992). As such the clustering of organizations and their outcomes –including the Marshallian districts– becomes defined as processual relationships among organizations fostered by the actions, relationships and interpretations of multiple individuals. The latter advances the view that organizational behaviors, including organizing, are not only efficiency driven but socially influenced and sustained (Portes & Landolt, 2000; Powell & DiMaggio, 1991).

By stressing the notion of embeddedness, economic sociology explains the nature of economic transactions as the outcome of networks among individuals (Grabher, 2006), hence opening the conversation to qualitative understandings of social structures. Accounts of Marshallian districts become explained not as economies of scale fostered by business concentrations, as traditionally proposed, but as a phenomenon of geographically localized social agglomeration with economic outcomes. As such organizations and clusters are understood as the relational context (and outcome) of individuals linked to each other (Granovetter & Swedberg, 1992; Lin, 2004; Zukin & DiMaggio, 1990).

The organizing processes, born from exchanges between individuals, are social networks that facilitate the flow and attainment of resources (Portes, 1998; Portes &

Landolt, 2000). The ability to secure resources that these networks provide, and not the resources themselves, are the local social capital that shape –and is shaped by– the local clustering of individuals (Grabher, 2006; Putnam, 1995). Yet this definition is not unproblematic. The actor's capacity to obtain resources by using social capital does not guarantee the resource itself, and even if attained, a positive outcome associated to its use may not be assured (Portes, 1998; Portes & Landolt, 2000). Furthermore the implicit assumption that only those who posses quality resources have the ability to accrue social capital denies the value of trustworthiness and solidarity as drivers of social ties (Portes, 1998; Portes & Landolt, 2000). The same mechanisms employed by individuals to secure their social capital can lead to negative outcomes for others (Portes & Sensenbrenner, 1993) including the exclusion of outsiders (Waldinger, 1995), excess claims on group members (Geertz, 1963), restrictions on individual freedoms (Waldinger, 1995), and downward leveling norms (Portes & Landolt, 1996). These paradoxical, and somehow contradictory, views can be exemplified by Florida and Putnam understandings of what is needed to have an innovative and creative community. While Florida (2004) advocates that communities with weak ties (i.e., more open to newcomers) are ideal cradles for creativity and new ideas, Putnam (1993) argues the opposite suggesting that communities with strong ties (i.e., high social capital) foster creativity and innovation by facilitating the sharing of resources among the established constituency.

In all, social activities, as well as all their economic outcomes (whether intended or not) do not happen in a vacuum; they are subject to spatial conditions (Grabher, 2006; Granovetter & Swedberg, 1992). That is, social processes –e.g., relations between individuals– affect both society at large and physical spaces inasmuch as location and

society affects them in return. This premise requires me to explore organizing processes, such as the creative class formation, as reciprocally influenced by, and influencing, its location and other socioeconomic processes insofar as other socioeconomic processes affect them in return.

Economic Geography

Economic geography studies the location, uneven distribution and spatial organization of socioeconomic activities (Lorenzen & Andersen, 2009). Its core premise advances that different spatial patterns generate different kinds of relationships within the local networks fostering different configurations of organizations, environments and activities (Yeung, 2005a, 2005b). It intrinsically implies that certain geographies would be more likely to render certain kind of socioeconomic networks than others.

As already discussed, extant perspectives on the creative class present it as a homogeneous collective of individuals sharing the same interests and preferences, and inhabiting a location invested with ideal attributes (e.g., Florida, 2002a, 2004). However, later works, such as Markusen's (2005) do not assume this monolithic view and propose that it is a discrete aggregate of occupational and regional variants. As such, the creative class is comprised by a multiplicity of individuals with a variety of interests reflected in their linking actions and enactment of various organizations and clusters. More recently Asheim & Hansen (2009) , through an analysis of the creative class in Sweden, suggested that not all members of the creative class may have the same locational preferences. This project joins these critiques to monolithic understandings of the creative class phenomenon and builds on the proposition that the creative class phenomenon is not limited to large urban settings but it may be also found in small communities.

Beginning with Richard Florida's *Rise of the Creative Class* (Florida, 2002a), the nature of the so-called creative class constituency, artists and artisans, as urban residents and political protagonists was recently explored in the context of urban renaissance (e.g., DeNatale & Wassall, 2007; Evans, 2007; Florida, Mellander, & Stolarick, 2008; Markusen, 2005). Florida's work served to put into a contemporary context Marshall's (1890) original idea of cities as socioeconomic landscapes of clustered creativity. While Marshall's work, framed by the birth of the industrial revolution, focused on the industrialization of society and the existence of industrial clusters, Florida's contemporary study spoke of cities as cradles of intellectual labor and clusters of creativity. The core difference between Marshall and Florida's work was not their historical context, but their phenomenological assumptions. To Marshall, the phenomenon was the outcome of economies of scale (Bergman & Feser, 1999), but to Florida it was the measurable aggregate of lifestyle choices by individuals.

These conversations share a structural argument stating that some urban geographies are better suited for business than others (Aguilar, 1967; Enright, 1998; Porter, 1995). Thus, advancing the mix of innovation, social networks, resources and opportunities that comes with the presence of a local *creative class* may lead to desirable and strategic places to establish an organization (Florida, 2002a, 2002b, 2007; Kuah, 2002; Markusen, 2005; Sorenson, 2003). These resources and opportunities should not be stagnant or concealed in silos within the community, but should dynamically and freely flow throughout the local meshes of relationships and associations linking individuals and organizations, a.k.a. the social networks (Baptista & Swann, 1998;

Beaudry & Breschi, 2003; Bell, 2005; Enright, 1998; Romanelli & Khessina, 2005; Sorenson, 2003).

These geographically circumscribed social networks foster what Marshall (1890) originally described as communities having the secrets of the trade "in the air". Flows of ideas within these communities make "innovation" a localized collective endeavor. Locally bound social networks encourage creativity and innovation by facilitating knowledge exchanges among geographically proximate actors, providing the community with stability by minimizing risks in the collective decision-making process (Boehm, 2005; Gaggio, 2006; Grabher, 2006), framing the collective's governance (Grabher, 2006) and promoting the local *cluster(ing)* of knowledge-based and creativity-related enterprises (DeNatale & Wassall, 2006; Donegan, Drucker, Goldstein, Lowe, & Malizia, 2008; Florida, 2002a; Gibson & Graham, 1992; Osorio, 2008; Porter, 1995; Yeung, 1998). This reinforces the idea that knowledge on how organizations relate to each other and to their location is a cornerstone of the *competitive advantage argument* (Porter, 1980, 1985, 1990, 2000).

For the purposes of this study, thus, I locate myself in the intersection of strategic management, economic sociology, and economic geography -as discussed and as represented in Figure 1- to argue that a the local creative class is an organizing socioeconomic phenomenon characterized by the active and interrelated coexistence of socioeconomically performing groups of individuals executing creative activities on a regular basis, while inhabiting a contiguous geographical space. A local creative class unfolds from a combination of historical conditions, available resources and on-going social relationships that would be difficult to replicate elsewhere (i.e., Gibson & Graham,

1992; Markusen, Wassall, DeNatale, & Cohen, 2008; Osorio, 2008). These complexities make it extremely difficult (if not altogether undesirable) to examine the creative class phenomenon separately from its temporal and spatially forming dynamics –and the methodology used in this study, as explained in chapter 2, attends to this. Specifically, in this study, I argue that it is necessary to simultaneously consider the *location,* the *socioeconomic context* and the collective actions of individuals to understand the formation of a creative class as a process.

Writing the Tale of a Town

In the following chapters I will further explore the above discussed issues by focusing specifically on the particulars of this project's case study location: a former mill town in Western Massachusetts (USA)[1].

In Chapter 2, I describe the methodology for the study, including research design, explanations about site selection, and approaches to gather and analyze data. By claiming that context matters I advance a general emic perspective for this project, which also supports a partially etic methodology. . That is, as I present my methods I will explain the use of an ethnographic lens that would later support the use of a social network analysis to enhance the narrative findings. At the end, this chapter provides a map of the structure of the project.

In Chapter 3, Where are all the Artists and Artisans? Personal Actions and Personal Associations, I describe my entrance to the field and my journey through the

[1] This project is located in Easthampton, MA. This community applied for, and was granted, the city form of government in 1996, though it wishes to be known as "The Town of Easthampton" as documented through the ethnographic work and stated in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' records of its incorporation as a city. Accordingly, I referred to this community as a "Town" throughout this work.

research site. By focusing on the perspectives of the locals I seek to give voice to their actions and show the unfolding of a local creative class as somewhat contested and often contradictory processes. This ethnographic narrative, from the ground up, contextualizes the next chapter where I explore organizing patterns throughout this town.

Chapter 4, Creative Class Organizing? follows the ethnographic narrative with social network analyses to better understand relationships that may indicate the unfolding of a creative class. I move my research lenses from a micro, to a meso and finally to a macro level of analysis to explore one-to-one relationships between artists and artisans, between them and other members of the community, and between theirs and various other institutional activities around town. In particular, at this last level I seek to understand the manner in which the unfolding of a local creative class may be relevant or not for the town as a whole.

In Chapter 5, Community Consequences: One Town, Two Tales, I present two contrasting moments in the history of the town. One exemplifies a "failed" attempt of the local arts and crafts community to self- organize, a situation which occurred during the early part of my research activities. The second is the story of a recent local organizing moment, which occurred at the very end of my fieldwork. In this one, artist and artisans and many other members of the community captured the local imagination and manage to coordinate the town towards a common goal. Throughout this narrative I show the interconnections over time of these two very different moments in the unfolding of a "creative class".

Chapter 6, Conclusions and Reflections, looks back into the project and discusses the implications of this work, including substantive contributions regarding further

understanding of the creative class as context specific collective phenomena, as well as interdisciplinary contributions for the fields supporting the project's theoretical framework. Additionally I recognize limitations of this project and suggest avenues for future research.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

As argued in Chapter 1, current works on the creative class have focused on locating and describing above-average geographical concentrations of creative individuals, thus taking for granted the processes that have brought them, and keep them, together (e.g., Florida, 2002a; Florida, 2002b, 2004). As such, these works present the creative class clusters as a source of local vibrancy, change and resources for business yet not elaborating on how or why these clusters happen or "influence" the community where they are located (e.g., Florida, 2002a; Florida, 2002b, 2004, 2005).

In contrast to these works, this dissertation explores local organizing processes that, over time, might develop into a phenomenon known as creative class, and examines the potential consequences of this phenomenon for the host community. To achieve these goals, this project required the use of a methodological approach suited to address the processual nature of the research question; *how do local organizing processes structure geographically bound and delimited creative class clusters?* Accordingly, the project evolved into a case study of a former mill town which claims a reasonable number of artists and artisans –i.e., creative individuals-- among its members.

The case study derived from a multi-method approach including participative ethnography and social network analyses where quantitative and qualitative data functioned in a complementary way. Participative ethnography explored and contextualized relationships between artists and artisans and their organizing attempts to

become members of the community. Social network analyses mapped and articulated recurring patterns of interactions among various other community participants and the artists and artisans, and also between them. The resulting case study presents a narrative of clustering of a potential creative class as a dynamic bottom-up phenomenon whose socioeconomic consequences cannot be guaranteed by formal planning.

Design of the Study

In contrast to traditional positivist perspectives that focus on the description of the objectified phenomenon named as the *creative class,* this project follows a phenomenological viewpoint aimed at exploring the local socioeconomic events behind it [i.e., the *geographically embedded, bound and delimited organizing –network(ing)– of artists and artisans within a community*]. I seek to understand the enabling and supporting processes from the actors' own perspective by examining how individuals experience the world, and how they go about their organizing processes (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984). Under these premises, the limits of this research are set by the actors themselves through their participation in local processes that create, support and provide meaning to their organizing. While the local presence of creative individuals is documented, their description as a creative class will only be relevant (i.e., existent) if their organizing patterns (e.g., networking) suggest that they can be recognized as such (Wasserman & Faust, 1994). This characterization allows me to delve into the meanings of an unfolding creative class as perceived and developed by the participants of the processes (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984). It is in this context that I use a multilevel case study approach to "voice" (Calás & Smircich, 1991) the members of a potential creative class as they enact, as individuals and as a group, their lifestyle choices (Calás & Wooldridge,

2004; Wooldridge *et al.*, 2005). This approach pays attention to the actions of individuals and explores how and why members of a (potential) creative class relate to each other. The resulting case study is a tale of a town that illustrates multiple instances of members of a (potential) creative class relating to each other. It also explores the organizing of a (potential) creative class throughout the town. Finally, if the presence of a creative class has become acknowledged by its constituents and other members of the community, the case study further explores how this unfolding affects the community at large.

To sum up this study, *A tale of a town* developed from a case study conducted through a multi-method approach (participatory ethnography and social network analysis) evaluating the organizing processes of a potential creative class. Specifically, I used a revelatory embedded single case study design (Yin, 2003a) that takes notice of different levels of local organizing (See Figure 2)

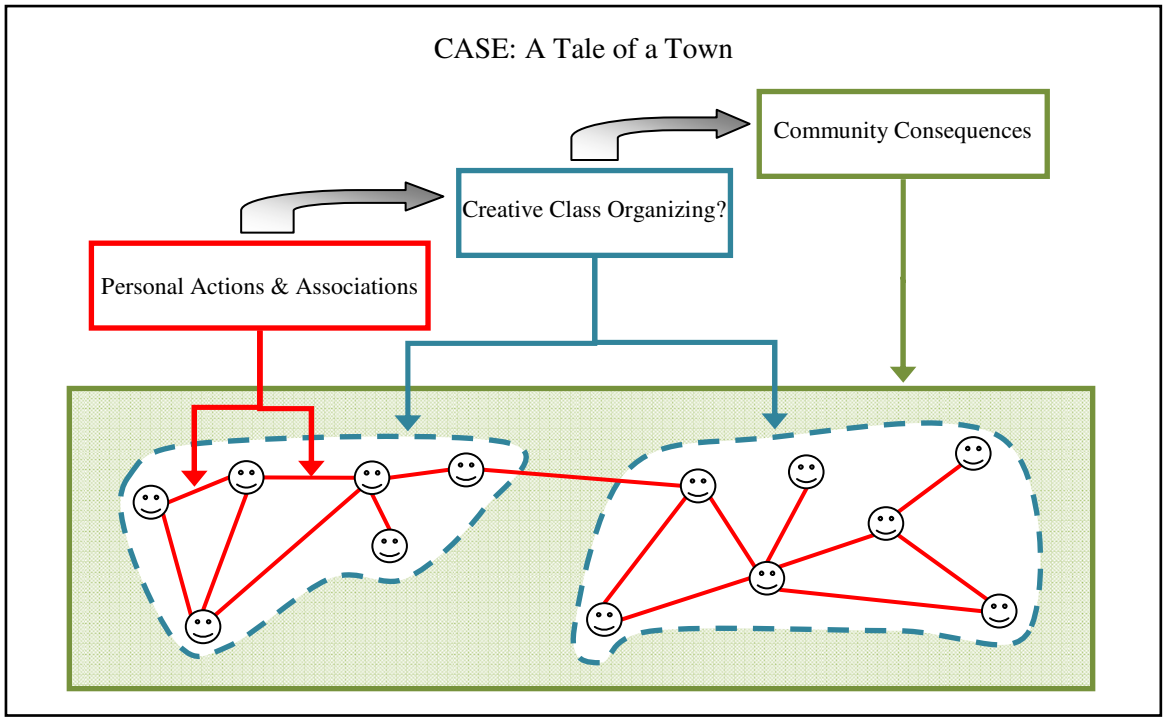


Figure 2: Schematic View of the Research Model

Site Selection

Mill towns in the USA, were born in the early to mid 19th century in the heart of New England, and grew mirroring the national business and social events. They were at times intended, developed and owned as a company's town but in some occasions grew "organically" as conglomerates of factories, or *clusters*. Labor mobility, economic changes, and cultural and social transformations were all recorded in the factories' payroll and logs as well as in town's chronicles (e.g., Devault, 1995; Hartford, 1990).

Globalization and technological changes of the late 1970s through the early 1990s transformed what was left of once-upon-a-time proud and prosperous mill towns across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts into a collection of rundown communities immersed in economic recession and struggling to modernize (Office of Economic Development Mass Government, 2001). Many of these once depressed towns are becoming cultural and creativity *clusters* [i.e., socioeconomically embedded and geographically delimited conglomerates of trendy cultural spots such as, North Adams and its Art Schools and Museum, or Shelburne Falls and its art community (Oehler *et al.*, 2006a)].

What happened in these towns between the closing of the last factory and their resurgence as *clusters* of artistic and creativity centers? How did they "bounce back" as flourishing communities? How did they transition from the labor intensive-manufacturing age into the creative economy era? While official accounts report the efficiency of the government's interventions to turn around these communities (NGA Report, 2002; Office of Economic Development Mass Government, 2001) we cannot help but ask what the role of the local residents was during this process until today. Were

they merely passive observers, or were they actively networking, lobbying policies and making changes possible?

An exemplar of the above described events can be found through the tale of the town of Easthampton, MA (See Appendix A for a description of the geographical location). This town, first settled by European immigrants in 1664 as an agriculture community, was for many years a manufacturing-based booming town. Easthampton was known as Button Town during the Civil War era, the Elastic Maker of the World from 1940 when United Elastic Company was opened and until the1960s, when it became Home Products Town, until the second half of the 1990s, that Stanley Home Products and Kellogg Brush Manufacturing operated there. From the middle of the 1980s until the end of the 1990s the number of empty factories in downtown grew and Easthampton joined other mill towns in their downturn. Globalization, understood in this town as cheaper labor elsewhere, brought down the local economy taking away jobs and bringing socioeconomic decline.

Yet the members of the community were not passive spectators nor was the economic slump the only thing happening in town. As the buildings were vacated, opportunities for new uses were found including unexpected non-manufacturing possibilities. While the local government and prominent citizens were still hoping to attract new manufacturing operations to occupy the physical and socioeconomic spaces that provided local employment and stability (The Master Plan Advisory Committee of Easthampton, 1987), some of the buildings were already creating new, non-conventional uses. A non-profit organization focused on helping people with disabilities to become integrated in society was the first to settle, followed by a myriad of artists, artisans and

other small organizations including businesses, NGOs, consulting services and other non-profits. At first local curiosities, artists and artisans were developing a stronger presence in the community yet their local role and influence was not clear to people in town or the artists themselves.

Yet, some were noticing and on February 22, 2005 a semi-formal meeting was called by the head of the town's planning office to start a dialogue among several local constituencies including some of the artists, members of the local planning board, and prominent citizens. The goal was to start a conversation to plan a Charrette with the aim of clarifying the role of the artists and artisans in the context of the local efforts towards a socioeconomic renaissance. This was the first time that an effort of this kind was undertaken in this community!

It is at this point when I first came into town with an explicit research interest; to explore the consequences of lifestyle choices in the context of the organizations-environment phenomenon. Living down the road from this town, I had driven through it in several occasions but never gave it a second look other than to notice some of the large empty factories and dilapidated properties (see Picture 1 and Picture 2 respectively). While working in an unrelated research project that sought to understand how lifestyle choices may affect –and be affected by– local socioeconomic processes, I attended the meeting of the local planning board discussing the upcoming Charrette. By serendipity I had stumbled into the opportunity to explore my long term interest: learning if a community can come together and make it a better place. Learning about the activities of artists and artisans in town via the Charrette was how the door opened for this project.

My attendance to the Charrette on February 8, 2005, and information gathered at the meeting plus preliminary archival research and conversations around town confirmed the current intent (and ongoing actions) of different members of the community to address the economic and social decline of their town. At the time of my entrance, these actions included, but were not limited to, the Charrette itself, the coordinating efforts by the town's planning department to craft an official "Easthampton Master Plan" and a parallel series of grassroots activities started mostly within local artisan groups seeking to push for a local socioeconomic renaissance (as suggested by my conversations with several artists within the town).

Picture 1: Back of the former mill factory at One Cottage Street in 2005

Picture 2: Abandon house across the street from former Stanhome factory at 116 Pleasant Street 2005

After many years of community failures, new local happenings led residents, both old timers and newcomers, to consider re-inventing the town –as part of their search for a new identity. Old-timers in town sought to maintain the town's traditions and revitalize the local economy by attracting new industries to the area and sponsoring economic benefits for traditional business enterprises –as mentioned earlier. In contrast, newcomers, people that neither lived through the declining process, nor had liaisons to the town's former manufacturing past, expressed different lifestyle expectations than the long term residents and sought alternative ways to revitalize the town.

Many newcomers showed interest in creative related activities, hence they had a desire to either make or support an arts-creativity related lifestyle. These people seemed

to have organized themselves simultaneously as individuals and as cliques in the Easthampton community and, consequently, and possibly by serendipity, were helping to shape the community. This shape-shifting process resulted in local grounds for creative individuals to network with each other, thus approaching my area of interest for this project: have they unfolded into a creative class?

This project focuses on the events prior, during and resulting from the 4th decennial community-wide planning session, also known as the Master Plan Meetings. Observations started in February 2005, one year ahead of the Master Plan Meetings scheduled to take place during 2006, included the Master Plan Document official approval by the town's council board in May 2008, and ended shortly after the Bear Fest in May 2009. Throughout this period I was involved in data collection, data analysis, and writing of the case study as further described below.

Research Methods

The methods used from the beginning to the end of the project were deployed in three phases –as illustrated in Figure 2, and discussed below.

Phase I

To start the project, there was a need to become familiar with the location (i.e., to observe through the eyes of the locals) and become a familiar face in the town (i.e., to minimize the disruptions that my presence in the field could create). To achieve these goals, I used, as my initial tool, a traditional participatory ethnographic approach including archival data. This preliminary data collection framed the subsequent phases of this project (see Table 1).

What is the life of artists and artisans like to enable them to be considered a creative class? To explore this type of research question, ethnographers spend considerable amounts of time among the people they are studying, oftentimes living with them to experience their world. As such, they frequently engage in "participant observation". This includes partaking as much as possible of the local daily life, while at the same time, carefully observing everything they can about it (Agar, 1996; Madison, 2005).

Throughout this process, ethnographers seek to gain what is called an "emic" perspective, or the "native's point(s) of view" without imposing their own conceptual frameworks (Madison, 2005). Through the participant observation method ethnographers record detailed field notes, conduct interviews based on open-ended questions, and gather available archival records. The ultimate goal of this process is to present a narrative, where the portrayed voices are a fair representation of daily local life experiences and the struggles of an individual or a community (Agar, 1996; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Madison, 2005; Parrott, 2005). In all, ethnography seeks to explore how the life of an individual, or group of individuals, unfolds (Agar, 1996). Thus, ethnographic work is generally concerned with social processes unfolding over time and, as such, typically employs extensive descriptions of social life (Agar, 1996; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

Methods vary, as does the level of study. Macro-ethnography focuses on the study of broadly-defined socioeconomic structures or cultural groupings (Collins, 1981, 1988), such as artists or a local creative class. Micro-ethnography, on the other hand, undertakes the study of narrowly-defined cultural groupings or individuals actions

(Collins, 1981, 1988), such as the daily actions by local artists or routines among members of the local Cultural Council.

This project alternated between the micro- and macro- methodologies as I moved in the field. The shifting lens provided me with a window into the way that artists and artisans co-create their everyday life (Berger & Luckman, 1989) into what has been called by others the "creative class" (Florida, 2002a). Following artists and artisans as they live, and listening to their narratives, provided me with insights of the processes that brought them together (or drove them apart). I was able to follow them as individuals through their organizing as clusters and during their pursuit of both their personal and shared goals.

Underpinned by interpretative notions, this work explores the processes co-created by artists and artisans to become organized within localities. The use of participatory ethnography allows for collecting observations of the mundane situations that enact these processes. My work, underlined by an interpretive approach, examined the organizing –organization process– of artists and artisans and the perceived positive outcomes of the processes for their home community. This organizing and its perceived positive outcomes are relevant to this study as current notions of the phenomenon presumed a creative class to foster positive socioeconomic changes in its host community.

Initial ethnographic data collection

As a first step I used archival data, including newspapers and official town records, to schedule a series of ethnographic observations on a number of art related events in town. From this work, I identified and documented: (1) an initial census of

local artists and artisans, (2) some of their links to other members of the arts community and their affiliation(s) to local art related organizations, (3) the roster of attendance at local events sponsored and/or organized by the members of the local arts community, and (4) the names of several organizations engaged in, and/or supporting the local arts (See Appendix B for a description of the data, Appendix C for a list of data sources and Appendix D for the data collection procedures).

In parallel, and following the initial information, I conducted several interviews. The ethnographic work included a series of conversations with local artists and artisans. Through these conversations I obtained authorization to be a participant observer by taking notes and, whenever possible, recording ongoing conversations and meetings at each one of these organizations. Additionally, using these meetings and events as my entry point, I approached other individuals, introduced myself and explained my desire to have one-to-one conversations with them to clarify and attain a better understanding of the *role of the arts in town.*

At the end, the initial use of the participant ethnography provided me with the names of local artists and artisans, their local associations and affiliations, and their participation in local events. All this information about *actors*, *associations*, *affiliations* and *events* gave me the feasible points of entry necessary to eventually plot the arts' community social networks while exploring the broader organizing processes which might be occurring.

Data management and analysis

After the first couple of field observations, I developed a routine to control the flow of information and make sense of it. Organizations were different and addressed

different issues of the town's everyday life, yet, they overlapped and complemented each other. They shared part of their memberships, and at times, pursued common and/or overlapping goals. All these aspects made it difficult for me to keep track of who said what, when and where. To keep records that would allow me to trace my notes and go back to members of different organizations to probe into further issues, I started to include, besides the date and time stamp, the name of the organization, and the event that I was documenting. Within the notes, I left space for reflections at the beginning and the end of each set of documents

I chronologically organized the data and cross-coded it by date, events' audio files, pictures, field notes, official minutes, news clips, blogs, emails and instant messages. This system helped me to link the details and start making sense of the events that were happening around the town in terms of the big picture, without letting me forget about the small details that made everyday life important (Smith, 2005). In all, the data management system provided me with a socioeconomic map to navigate in the field and keep current when entering and exiting it.

I produced a series of independent files each year to store the data. . For electronic media and recordings, additional pages were integrated with brief summaries of their content, including keywords. A master coding file was electronically stored for easy location and retrieval of information. This file facilitated the access to diverse data and formats. The fieldwork resulted in 360 hours of audio recordings of meetings, 400 pages of transcribed field notes, about 1,200 pages of email exchanges, including minutes from meetings, 200 pictures, and 10 DVDs of town meetings.

As I was organizing and compiling these data, I began to get a general idea about the processes within the community and the role of the artists and artisans. I created word documents to record these thoughts. After integrating all the information in a master data file, I took the time to go over the data and re-immerse myself in the documented moments, as well as to place them into the perspective of the whole history.

As per Esterberg (2002), I used a two-step coding process to ensure a good sense of my data. Following Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2004, 2006), I used coding to locate key themes, patterns, ideas, and concepts within the data. While I was sorting and filing, I sought to identify prevalent themes and topics. I located ideas and mapped patterns. This was consistent with Esterberg's (2002) suggestions, as it allowed me to explore the data line-by-line, rather than subjecting it to broad categorizations.

As I read the data, I maintained my aim to understand and describe, and constantly reminded myself to avoid "evaluating people and their actions" (Hammersley, 2005:44). With this approach I gave "priority to processes rather than to 'causes' or internal psychological 'motives' " (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995:146). This helped me to understand how artists and artisans (co)constructed their daily lives as they (and I) co-participated in meetings and other events.

After the data collection period ended in October 2009, I revisited my data. At this time, I used as a guideline my original list of coding of themes. This second time around, I used a more focused approach (Esterberg, 2002)) that allowed me to document particular instances and better define ideas. I chose to do this by hand, as I wanted to avoid the pitfalls of using qualitative software (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2003). Thus, I only used the software (Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Outlook, Microsoft

Exchange, and Google Labs) as an organizational, time-saving tool (Smith & Hesse-Biber, 1996).

Phase II

While Phase I focused on entering the field and identifying members of the local arts and artisan community and their actions, Phase II, (see Table 1, page 44), mapped and documented their socioeconomic organizing and its local impact within the community. Informed by the initial ethnographic work of Phase I, Phase II used social network methodologies to extend the search of members of the local creative class and map their processual linking through lenses that explored the empirical relevance of homophily, affinity and trust. These new endeavors did not discontinue the exploratory ethnographic work, but contextualized and extended its focus by offering new tools and theoretical lenses to view and document these relationships in context.

The social network methods were incorporated to further inform and structure findings from the ethnographic work, describing it as networking processes fostered and sustained by the actions of individuals. As such, the unit of observation in this second phase was, first, the relationships among the members of the arts and artisans community. Thus, the focus of this phase was to identify:

a) Patterns of relationships: with whom, how and why people engage in possible creative class related relationships, e.g., dyads (two actors and their ties), triads (three actors and their ties), or larger systems (subgroups of individuals, or entire networks) (Wasserman & Faust, 1994).

b) Effects of the creative class network on individuals: explore the individual's viewpoints of their network structural environment as providing opportunities

or constraints for their individual actions, e.g., mapping and contextualizing the network content and processes (Borgatti, 2005; Wasserman & Faust, 1994).

In addition to the ongoing participatory and archival ethnographic work, I used in Phase II a questionnaire to document the ego networks' membership. Using the earlier ethnographic observations taking place during Phase I (Table 1) I derived a snowball sampling approach which identified local artists and artisans, as well as the places and events where they were most likely to be found. This approach was used in the context of *free recall* (to freely name other members of the network without limiting choices to a pre-defined set of names) and *free choice* methods (not to cap the number of people that an individual can name) (Wasserman & Faust, 1994).

Structural variables

Social networks are graphical representations of the relationships among individuals and, as such, do not focus on the individuals themselves (Wasserman & Faust, 1994). These representations are informed by what is called *structural* variables which, as their name suggests, describe the "structure" of the relationships and, by extension, the structure of the network itself. Thus, these variables contain the measurements and nature of the ties between two particular actors. Information regarding these variables in the context of this project, was primarily explored through inquiries (i.e., ethnographic observations, archival data, questionnaires and interviews) regarding with whom individuals talk about art, business, and lifestyles. This was

explored in the context of trust [believing in the honesty and reliability of others (Gaggio, 2006; Paniccia, 1998; Wasserman & Faust, 1994)].

Likewise, information on actors' demographics (e.g., age, sex and education), and self-assumed and publicly-assigned identities (e.g., artist, artisan, professional or businessperson) served to inform *composition* variables (Wasserman & Faust, 1994). Data on memberships and associations (e.g., guilds, clubs and public service) informed the *affiliation* variables (Wasserman & Faust, 1994). Finally, the use of the *composition* and *affiliation* variables, in conjunction with the *structural* variables, served to explore the elements of homophily [association of equals (Handcock, Raftery, & Tantrum, 2007)], affinity [social resemblance (Ruyu & Kuperman, 2007; Sorenson, 2003)] and their relevance for creative class network(ing).

In short, the data collection process can be broadly categorized into four different sources of information: (a) *archival data,* (b) *observations*, (c) *questionnaires, and (d) interviews.*

a) ***Archival data*** had four main purposes. First, the data was used to identify the network's actors and highlight possible key informants and points of entry into the field. Secondly, these data served to cross reference the ethnographic observations in terms of event participation and actors' affiliations. Third they provided information on organizational affiliations and events participations. Finally, these data served to contextualize the town's evolution and the contemporary importance of the creative class organizing as part of the town's development and economic growth. The data were collected from government agencies, research reports, and news outlets such as traditional

and on-line newspapers (See Appendix B for a description of the data, Appendix C for a list of data sources and Appendix D for the data collection procedures).

b) ***Observations.*** Ethnographic data was used to analyze and identify the creative class' social network structural data and processes. For the purposes of this project, this type of data was collected throughout town by attending art related events and activities as already described (See Appendix B for a description of the data, Appendix C for a list of data sources and Appendix D for the data collection procedures).

c) ***Questionnaires.*** Evaluation of the nature and strength of the relationships were complemented with the use of questionnaires. This instrument served to identify the ego networks, taking into account the in and out degrees, as well as the strength of the reported relationships. Furthermore, the use of theoretical constructs as part of the inquiry provided a general understanding of the nature of the relationships, as well as the priorities of the individuals when engaged in these exchanges (See Appendix G for the relationships between questions and domains of interests and Appendix H for a sample questionnaire).

d) ***Interviews.*** Most of my interviews took the form of conversations or "talking with people" (DeVault & McCoy, 2002:756). They took place during fieldwork when I was observing and documenting meetings and/or events. At such points I would engage in conversations and ask for additional information to clarify ideas or actions.

In addition to conversations, general interviews were set to further clarify understandings about the local organizing of the actors in the art and art related enterprises within town, e.g., creative class processes. After obtaining the ethnographic and archival data and performing a preliminary analysis, a series of follow up interviews were scheduled with individuals signaled as key informants. These key informants were selected based on one of three criteria: (1) their tenure in town, (2) their position within the social network, or, (3) because they were signaled by other actors through snowballing, a.k.a., "chain referral sampling", as key informants.

Each interview was divided in two parts. The first part consisted of a series of closed-ended questions that sought to clarify and/or enrich the ethnographic and archival data. It was followed by a series of open-ended questions. This second set of questions was tailored to understand each individual's history, experiences and perceptions of the town's evolution and their role in the process. Whenever possible, these interviews were recorded and extensive notes were taken to ensure the recording of non-verbal information and to guarantee that data was preserved in case the recording was damaged. (See Appendix B for a description of the data, Appendix C for a list of data sources and Appendix D for the data collection procedures).

Mapping the creative class

In terms of the tools available for the social network analysis, I used standard software applications as recommended by Wasserman and Faust (1994). Yet, as no single application served to address all the issues, and most software for social network

analysis operates as self-standing, I alternated between UCINet, and Pajek. Finally, I used outputs from these programs with SPSS as needed, for more refined statistical analysis.

Data for interpreting these quantitative analyses come from archival sources, interviews, and ethnographic observations, including actors' affiliations, attendance at public events, and participation in meetings and email exchanges, among others. Likewise, the nature of the affiliations, events, associations and gatherings, along with the discussed topics, were used to contextualize the nature of the network and the relationships among the actors. Cliques and sub-groupings were delimited by membership and frequency of attendance at events with a particular theme and tested against measurements of cohesiveness. The recorded exchanges between actors provided the structural data for the network. Principal component analysis served to identify and explore subsets of networks. Blockmodel analyses were done to explore the nature of the relationships of organizations and domains of interests in the community.

Altogether, the use of social network analysis served to explore and to map the artists and artisans organizing process in the context of their community. In particular, it served to better understand relationships among artists and artisans and between them and other members of the community. This analysis served to explore the impact and reach of the community of artists and artisans in the context of the town's everyday life and provided information about how local artists influenced the organizations and the town's socioeconomic processes.

Phase III

While Phase III can be considered the completion of this project (i.e., the writing of the dissertation as such) its actual focus appears in the following three chapters, which taken together comprise the narrative of a case study. Specifically, this narrative includes the materials gathered through ethnographic and social network analysis, and also includes an additional chapter (Chapter 5) which further questions whether a creative class has really unfolded in the town of Easthampton. In other words, the process of gathering the data is part and parcel of the story of this town –i.e., a case study.

In general, a case study can be any evaluative application carried out to assess a processual phenomenon by providing special attention to the completeness in the observation, reconstruction, and analysis of an event, while incorporating the views of the "actors" (Yin, 2003a; Zonabend, 1992). This methodology fosters analytical thinking in terms of wider problems and solutions (Creswell, 2003; Eisenhardt, 1989, 1991; Tellis, 1997; Yin, 2003a, 2003b). Accordingly, the case study's unit of analysis is typically a system of action (a process), in this case the unfolding of a creative class.

Extending upon this, the use of a case study for this project was aimed to present the organizing processes by which a group of individuals may unfold into a local creative class and thus to explore and present:

- the creative class' organizing processes, and
- the nature, evolution and purpose of these processes.

In particular, a focus on networking and coalition building:

- viewed actors and their actions as interdependent, rather than independent, autonomous units, and

- considered relational ties (linkages) between actors as channels for the transfer or "flow" of resources (either material or nonmaterial)

An integrative narrative of the social network analysis framed and informed by the ethnographic analysis provides a vivid representation of *the processes that enable, relate and sustain individuals as they may unfold into a creative class at a particular geographical location, while delving into the impact –and outreach– of their presence in this particular space*. In this context, the case study presents contextualized (ethnographically informed) maps of the local interactions processes as represented by social networks.

Finally, the *case study* as an evaluative application has the ability to assess complex socioeconomic phenomenon by providing special attention to the completeness in observation, reconstruction, and analysis of the event, while at the same time, incorporating the views of the "actors" (Yin, 2003a; Zonabend, 1992). Hence, in this project, the case study, by using an ethnographic and social network lens, offers a detailed contextualized representation and analysis of the creative class' bottom-up organizing, as well as its consequences, in a socioeconomic and geographically embedded context: the town of Easthampton.

Table 1: Case Study informed by Participatory Ethnography and Social Networks Analysis as Complementary Tools

			Data	Focus	Objectives
Data Collection	**Phase I**	**Ethnography**	• Archival data (e.g., emails, town files, organizations' minutes) • Field Observations (e.g., meetings, local activities) • Conversations (e.g., interviews, dialogs)	• Site selection • Establish research boundaries • Preliminary ethnographic data collection	• To identify a research site • To explore local happenings from the residents' perspectives thus delving into –and contextualizing– the unfolding of the artists and artisans network(ing) e.g., the local socioeconomic processes
	Phase II	**Ethnography**	• Archival data (e.g., emails, town files, organizations' minutes) • Field observations (e.g., meetings, local activities) • Conversations (e.g., interviews, dialogs)	• To follow key informants • To explore the nature and context of the local network(ing) processes	• To follow local network(ing) processes as they developed through local grassroots activities
		Social Networks	• *Ethnographic data from Phase I* • *Ethnographic data from Phase II* • Questionnaires • Interviews (structured and un-structured) • Archival data (e.g., emails, town files, organizations minutes)	• Social Network data collection ,e.g., Structural variables, nodes. • Mapping the creative class	• To evaluate the nature and characteristics of the local artists and artisans network • To map the unfolding of the local artists and artisans socioeconomic process as they happen
Writing The Tale of a Town	**Phase III**	**Case Study**	**Ethnographic Observations from Phase I & II**	• Individual choices of network(ing) • Local organizing of artists and artisans	• Micro-level Analysis: Personal Actions & Associations
			Social Network Analysis from Phase II	• The integration of artists & artisans as part of the local community • The organizing of local artists and artisans	• Meso-level Analysis: Creative Class Organizing? • Macro-level Analysis: Community Consequences

CHAPTER 3

WHERE ARE ALL THE ARTISTS AND ARTISANS?

PERSONAL ACTIONS AND PERSONAL ASSOCIATIONS

After being empty for several years, three large factory buildings –EastWorks, One Cottage Street, and Paragon– were overtaken by artists and artisans, slowly at first during the late 1970s but progressively faster. By 1987 artists at One Cottage Street organized their first annual sale –it was a small event that years later would become emblematic of the town. As this was happening local residents and authorities were still trying to figure out how to bring back traditional industries to re-activate the local economy. The local community was not acknowledging the artists and artisans as an element worth mentioning other than as a newsclip novelty. The town's Major in an interview in 1998 said that the town had the possibility to become better known for its association with the arts (Boucher, 1998), yet at the 1998 Master Plan meeting, town participants –including him– listed the town's constituencies and strengths as: "industry, small business, downtown merchants, restaurateurs, schools, human services and social organizations, municipal services, residents of all ages and income brackets" (http://easthamptonweb.com/vision/vision.html) excluding the already significant and still growing community of artists and artisans.

Yet, by 2000, there were no empty spaces in EastWorks and One Cottage Street, and Paragon was opening new areas to meet the growing demand. At the same time, multiple farm houses and nearby apartments were occupied by new people seeking

proximity to this artistic / creative community –whether as an inspiration or as a lifestyle choice. It is at this point when some local people, outside the artists and artisans network, started noticing the arts community not because they were more in numbers, as the buildings had been busy for some time now, but because these individuals had started to have a direct economic and social impact on the town's processes as their work became portrayed in national media (e.g. Hagan, 2000). Simultaneously, a series of grassroots activities such as the Windows Project, started in 2003 –where artists used business' windows as art galleries- sprung up around town as part of the artists and artisans' agenda to make their arts locally relevant.

The idea behind these efforts, as explained to me in a conversation during the 2005 Windows Project by the former Windows Project coordinator and Chairwoman of the local Cultural Council at that time, was *"to make art part of the daily life […] and to take it out of the museum."* These activities provided individual artists and artisans with a sense of town ownership as part of their identity, and prompted them to take active participation in shaping the town. This self-awareness was reinforced by perceptions of power, purpose and unity that other members of the community invested on them as they began to see artists and artisans as an enacting force of "normal" everyday life. By 2007, not only did the new town's Master Plan include artists and artisans but also opened a chapter devoted to arts and culture as part of the town's identity and goals (http://www.pvpc.org/ehamp/). This became tangible at town meetings as artists and artisans became involved and vocal about happenings in town beyond the arts, in issues such as transportation, education and energy conservation. Many participants brought innovative ideas to otherwise common problems and proposed solutions shaped as art

interventions, for instance, painting old buildings while making public murals in the process, providing sitting spaces at local parks in the form of benches crafted by local artists as functional sculptures, organizing art walks events so people in town could wander around and get to know each other, while outsiders were able to attend, mingle and consume, and so on.

Where are all the Artist and Artisans?

Thus, where are the artists and the artisans? Around town, there are three large buildings full of artists. They are the legacy of a wealthy and industrious past, when the town was a Mill town. These buildings, while they sat empty and rundown for a long time, are now vibrant and fully occupied by creative people. They are the homes and studios of the largest concentration of artists and artisans in town. Renovated parking lots, a new bus stop and large signs announcing the businesses inside adorns the first of the buildings; Eastworks. A fresh bed of flowers by its main entrance across a pond and a sharp looking banner marks the way into another arts and artisans center; One Cottage Street. A parking lot full of cars with a sign listing the names of artists and businesses at its entrance lets you know of your arrival at the right place in the third one; the Paragon Building.

Strategically located on the waterfront of a series of man-made ponds connected by the Manhan river, that once turned their long gone mills, these three buildings have an easy access into and out of town as well as scenic views of the surrounding hills. Large cathedral ceilings, solid floors and open spaces that once accommodated bulky and noisy machinery are the perfect stages for arts that may require industrial settings such as bookbinding, cabinet and furniture making, mono-typing and screen printing, among

others. Large windows set to take advantage of the daylight in a former era when electric light was not a standard feature, made of these former factories a perfect address for the arts and crafts.

Picture 3: Summer View Over the Local Hills From the Stairs at the Eastworks Building

Town regulations that allow the mixed use of these spaces for industrial and housing purposes, and low rents matching the Spartan finishing of the rooms, blank canvas to be filled, have lured in dozens of artists and artisans as conveyed by the directories at the entrances and the resident listings at the buildings websites. A jewelry artist, enameller & metal-smith woman briefly described Easthampton in a 2009 survey; *"[…] rents are affordable, space is readily available, and the town and landlord were flexible in letting me have the equipment I need to do my work (primarily torches indoors, with the requisite gas tanks)."*

Among all these three independent buildings, over four hundred artists have their studio and point of sale in this Western New England rural town of almost 16,000 people.

Conversations with people that have their "artistic home" in these buildings confirms the ideas of collegial environments and supportive artists and artisans neighbors; it is "*similar to being at graduate school*" (Hagan, 2000) an artist expressed in a newspaper interview in 2000.

However, postings of "no soliciting" and "visits only by appointment" adorn many closed doors from where industrious noises and "working" music are heard as you walk along the long empty and narrow hallways in one of the buildings. Another building portrays a maze-like layout where visitors may not find their way without a guide. In fact, on Open Studio days, there are hired guides, dressed in reflective orange vests with maps on hand at the doors to help you navigate your way around! In this building, not knowing where to go is an invitation not to visit. Friendly staff at the building's main offices will call people at their studios to have them come down and pick you up –as they did for me on several occasions. Thus, not knowing who you are going to visit is not really an option. Wandering the hallways seeking for someone to talk to is always a suspicious signal, if by chance you walk by a casually open door. Again, friendly people will help you to get there, but you need to know where is "there". "*May I help you*" and "*who are you looking for?*" are the common greetings in this place.

Information posted on websites by artists and artisans confirm the image of the local arts and artisans' community; they are present, they are heard, but they are not to be disturbed. Economic development arguments that talk about showcasing artists and artisans and taking advantage of their creativity for the common good do not account for this closed doors scenario. When confronted with these ideas, a potter-woman in the maze building commented in conversation in late 2008 that for her, it was hard to be

creative and productive when people were coming to "watch" her work on regular basis. She does not live in town, thus, she often, and almost apologetically, conveys the idea of maximizing her time at the studio. Another woman that works with fused glass in the same building commented that her craft was dangerous; "*you do not want people to get hurt; it is better to close the door.*" Others just spoke of the need for solitude, as they worked better alone, only talking with others if an idea needed to be discussed; "[…] *you just need to close your door sometimes, it is not that I don't like people, it is that sometimes my neighbors are too much* –she giggles and touched my arm as a sign to convey a confidence–*and when you need to work, you work. It is not that I don't like people or anything like that. I go out with [him] for lunch often* –she says pointing at a studio on the other side of her wall. *It is just that it is not my thing to always be social. […] I guess we all are social, but we work here too, it is not like we come to chat*" –a monotyping artist woman offered as an explanation about hers and others' doors around the building often set ajar or just plainly closed.

All three of the buildings are vibrant communities on the inside just not that much associated with the outside. In a questionnaire distributed in 2008, the female life partner of a local male oil painter described their life together at their building. They chose this place because of the community and because of the possibility for him to have a home-studio. "*[It is] our neighborhood and filled with friends with whom we socialize regularly. We also watch out for one another, support each others' work and share information. It's a great community....a very personal community."*

Visiting the downtown on a random weekday looking for artists and artisans, or evidence of their presence, can prove to be equally hard. The sculpture at the gazebo at

the entrance of the town is a 1800s functional water fountain. A nearby small park portrays a series of flag poles and memorial plates as decorations in remembrance of its veterans. Uniform looking houses and storefronts displaying merchandise without any kind of decorations are the frame of a broad interstate road that becomes one of the town's main streets. Parallel streets take you to areas where many houses have seen better days and wealthier tenants. This community differs from the ones located up the road in the nearby towns where five institutions of higher education are the heartbeat of local lives.

During Thanksgiving and Christmas, people around this town try to break away from the grey uniformity and use commercial decorations to stage their town. A large inflatable turkey in a front yard is not out of question, or out of place, amid the local rows of small mill town houses with front yards sprinkled with kid's toys, seasonal banners and yard gnomes. In winter time the front yard decorations are replaced with reindeers, Walt Disney characters wearing red scarves, gloves and hats and the ever present Santa Claus on a rooftop. Plastic made, Wal-Mart available, cheap green and red slides are casually found lying on porches and nearby snowmen are located in the front and backyards. Banks of grey snow mark home driveway entrances and sidewalk edges.

Picture 4: Easthampton 2005 Thanksgiving Decorations

Spring comes with a renewed spirit of community and puritan working ethic. Downtown gets its annual clean-up by dozens of volunteers, including the town's mayor, who does not participate as the task manager, or in search of the opportunistic photo-op. He is just another set of hands working for this community. At this turmoil of cleaning, artists and artisans cannot be distinguished from the rest of the volunteers. Yet, they are there; I recognize their faces from art related events. They do not wear badgers or distinctive clothing. They do not do anything special or different to set them apart from the rest of the volunteers. If you do not know them, you will miss them altogether, just as it was with the mayor and all the other volunteers.

Picture 5: Major Michael Tautznik Working with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to Relocate Fish from the Wilton Brook inlet at Nashawannuck Pond During the Summer 2009 Dredging and Cleaning the Nashawannuck Pond Project

In the summer, outdoor life breaks the local routine, setting a new pace mirrored in all the surrounding communities in the area. The local system of mills that once turned the industrial wheels of the town becomes fishing grounds for trout. The surrounding wildlife parks are targeted by local mushroom and berry pickers. Smells of summer are in the air as many residents grill locally grown sweet corn to be eaten along with hamburgers and other grilled veggies. Farming comes to life, not as a casual event, but as a tradition carried on since town was settled in 1664 as a farm town. A local community-supported cooperative farm offers fresh vegetables on a weekly basis from the beginning to the end of the growing season. Just like in the other nearby cities and towns, several semi-annual sales of arts and crafts around town are announced. *Concerts at the park*, as the weekly music events at the local gazebo are publicized, where people bring lawn chairs on weekends to the 100-square-yard green area located at the entrance of town.

Despite the burst of life in summer time, art outside of its local “official” days and schedules is hard to spot. The summer related art activities are not unique or unusual for the area. However, they oftentimes fall short to other events staged in the neighboring communities. A concert by a local band on a 100 square yard green patch surrounded by passing cars may not measure up to performances in a nearby town where series of bands play on stage while an arts and crafts festival with food stands occupies the commons. Open studio sales are the largest claim to fame for the town, yet they only happen twice a year. Outside of those special dates, resident artists go back to their own normality and seclusion.

Picture 6: Tuesday, June 2, 2009 Gazebo Nights. "Four on the Floor" Band

Only an attentive eye may spot the signs of an emerging and shy arts and crafts community in this town. Sprinkled signs are all over, yet not obvious or conspicuously located. A local artist has proudly set his mailbox’s pole at home as a handcrafted rocket. If you ask him for directions to get to his place, he uses this feature as the distinctive

marker of his home. He is not the only local artist or artisan using arts and crafts to mark his or her residence. A walk inside the building where the oil painter and his life partner live reveal a top floor hallway with a row of home doors decorated and marked by distinctive pieces of art.

Signs of the arts are not excluded from the local business scene either. A sandwich shop in downtown hangs on its walls art from members of the local community. A close look at the side of the frames lets you distinguish a one-inch-wide white label with the name of the piece and a price tag. The clerk at the counter, in a conversation, stated that the owner "*is really big on the local arts*" –meaning engaged and supportive.

The local ice-cream parlor is another place where new relationships with the arts may be spotted. It is not on the walls –as they were bare white for several years before casual pictures and paintings started to come and go. It is not on the store front postings –they comply with the very strict local regulations that make even sandwich boards illegal. The source of art at the establishment is the person across the counter; its owner, a master ice-cream maker and flavor formulator. He is more than a generous ice-cream genius, as his customers describe him; he is a former engineer, a photographer and a book writer. He regularly shares his entrepreneurial and creative experiences around town on his public blog (http://icecreamdiaries.blogspot.com). On his writings, he vividly describes the local life from his "bartender" side of the counter. He writes about the local scene and what it means to be a new business in town. Reading his blog sequentially, from beginning to end, one entry at a time, brings awareness of the progressive changes happening around town since 2001 when he first moved there.

Searching for a home around town may put you on the path of another "uncovered" local artist. A woman realtor quick on the smile, with an assertive talk and over 1-million dollar track record on transactions in 2007 may surprise you with an invitation to hear her sing "at a local gig" with friends. Her business' web domain tells it all: www.jazzdivarealtor.com. She is a part of the Cultural Council and a very active member of the local art scene. She often bridges the local business community with the local arts and crafts. However, she is not like many other artists in town. She works hard to make clear distinctions between her artistic and business egos –even when they merge in her daily doings.

Talking to the mayor's wife introduces another story of artists "crafting" a community. By her own accounts, she is a self-taught artist. She does not do much art, as family, friends and the need of income takes priority –the mayor's salary, which is public domain, is not that much to start with. Yet, while a part time artist, she has been instrumental in arranging the use of hallways' walls of the government building as galleries for local artists to display and sell. This achievement is not something that she brags about. This can only by learned by talking to her close friends and colleagues, as the idea of conflict of interests may arise in the conversation. The previous head of the Cultural Council used to point out to the pieces on her way to meetings and refer to them as a local achievement by the arts community. Due to this open minded idea, the major's wife was acknowledged as an active member of the arts and crafts community.

Walking across downtown, oddly placed mugs and crafts in a local gift shop's windows display breaks the uniformity of the lineups of mass produced gifts. Their out-of-place status makes them an iconic representation of the changes taking place around

town; a place still linked to its industrial past, yet looking to get in-sync with its new future. Announcements at the library and homemade flyers promoting local arts and crafts classes mark the growth of a local creative community. Moving away from downtown at no more than 5 minutes walking distance, there is a restored Art Nouveau theater converted into a high-end interior design store. While most of the customers at this establishment, by the owner's account, do not live in town, some of the works exhibited there, such as paintings, pictures, and decorations, were created locally. Expensive designer furniture and decorations are strategically complemented and enhanced by arts and crafts from the studios down the road.

If you continue walking down the street you will see a restored and repaired shop for vintage musical instruments, that has its home not far away from a relatively recently opened tattoo parlor (see Picture 7). This last shop, the tattoo parlor, finds itself as one of the examples of the duality of the local creative community. Creativity and vibrancy contrasted with apparent social disruption, art and innovation could be perceived as breaking away from normality in this once very conservative and traditional New England town.

Picture 7: Off the Map Tattoo Parlor, Summer 2006

Another example of duality is found nearby in one of the former mill buildings. A bar, legacy of a former past as a mill town in a downturn, has on its narrow sidewalk a set of 2 white plastic outdoor chairs complemented by a small hand-crafted table, no more than a foot across and two feet high topped with an almost always used ashtray. The space, an awkward smoking area often occupied by bar patrons, tells nothing to passersby who often need to get off the sidewalk and onto the street, as this particular setting partially blocks their path. Yet, the small table's ironwork legs, displaying a glass mosaic as a top, is in its own right a remarkable piece of art more attuned to a Victorian garden than to a sidewalk by a bar. Nevertheless, its casual presence at this place calls attention to understandings about the role of arts in the community.

Little by little, art is moving out of the books and museums and becoming part of the local everyday life. It is becoming part of the processes that make everyday life

ordinary. Likewise, the artists are all around town, yet not always visible. And just like art, they are, little by little, becoming a noticeable part of the local everyday life. Yet, this is perhaps a too sanitized version of this story, and it may be better to start from the beginning…

Where it All (Perhaps) Started: The History of Two Buildings

The extant literature on the creative class describes the phenomenon as a happy group of people willingly and industriously working to improve their community, that values them in return. Local benefits associated with the creative class range from economic to social. In the realm of economics, their presence has been coupled with an increase in local revenue. In the particular case of artists and artisans, the economic benefits are depicted as economic spillovers (or trickling) of people visiting the community to sightsee around the local arts and crafts. Visitors are expected to eat at local restaurants, stay at local Bed and Breakfasts and pay taxes on their purchased art, thus activating the local economy.

Socioeconomic changes associated with the local presence of artist and artisans are more subtle and harder to assess than an increase in sales. They involve progressions in the transformation of the local mindset. They affect local structures –and vice versa. Their outcomes are oftentimes perceived as diverse and vibrant communities with a high quality of life for all. Yet, the changes take a toll on their promoters and advocates; the social disruption of reality is not always welcome, and its outcomes are hardly predictable.

While the number of artists and artisans in Easthampton has grown over the last 10 years, many of them were already present as far back as 15 to 20 years ago or longer

as unknown young artists or local youngsters were trying to get a break while living on a budget. They were not the desirable, successful and well known selves of today –and nobody knew for sure if anyone among them would ever become so. They underwent changes as much as they changed their surroundings in the process.

Some of the changes that took place with their gradual arrival and incorporation into the community are part of today's everyday life. Perhaps the foremost noticeable change was the ceasing of industrial activities in the buildings. While this sounds obvious, it was not so at first. Empty factory buildings were the local concern at a time when many among the local population were former workers in those buildings –or had a friend who was so. For the Town Council –replaced in 1996 by an elected Major– the pressure was on. They were friends to both the unemployed and the former bosses. A population with low skills and multiple empty factory buildings was in the lookout for new industrial ventures to fill those spaces. Additionally, the owners of the buildings needed to do something about them. An industrial complex is not something that you just hand out –in exchange for a crispy one dollar bill– to someone that knocks at your door one morning with a smile on her or his face –or is it?

The year was 1976, and J.P. Stevens Co. had been peddling their old building at One Cottage Street in Easthampton for at least 4 years. At the same time, Riverside Industries Inc., a non-profit agency serving people with disabilities, was under the pressing need for a new location. Between 1968 and 1972, two separate fires destroyed the facilities of Riverside Industries (formerly known as Occupational & Vocational Developmental Center for the Handicapped –OVDCH), eventually forcing them out of Northampton, MA into the old Brassworks building in Haydenville, MA (Your Riverside

Connection, Fall 2003). Both of these are towns close to Easthampton. The Haydenville location was –according to accounts of people working there then– a dreadful place. The Executive Director of Riverside industries at the time, Ed Pion, would go driving around to find a new place for their activities –as accounted by Ron Bittel, retired President of Riverside Industries. It had to be large enough to accommodate all the employees and close enough so the people that they served could still work with them. Down the road from their former location at Northampton, he happened to drive by an empty factory building that, while it was too big for them and looked abandoned from the outside, it had potential.

Without much to lose and everything to gain, Ed, or "Fast Eddy," as some remember him, went in search of the owners of the place to talk them into a deal. Getting an appointment at J.P. Stevens Co. was the first step. After a sales pitch, Ed convinced the executives that they were losing money keeping ownership of a building that had no buyers. A hand shake and a crispy one dollar bill got him the building that was written off from the J.P. Stevens Co. books as a donation to a local non-profit.

With more space than he needed and a new address to put on the official correspondence, Ed moved the operations to Easthampton, preventing the building from becoming a factory in any near future. The first order of business was to clean an area to set the offices and start working. Shortly thereafter, economic needs matching their non-profit status and the abundance of space around them got the organization into the rental business.

Many individuals and organizations came and went through those doors starting with Warwick Press in 1977, but the most important and memorable at the time (July

1978) was the One Cottage Street School of Fine Woodworking known then as Leeds Design Workshop, a woodworking school (New England School of Architectural Woodworking, 2009). They were working in collaboration with the University of Massachusetts offering adult beginning and intermediate classes in woodworking, eventually including architectural woodworking career training. The space for rent at One Cottage Street was ideal for their work. A contract was signed immediately and classes were started. Time went by and graduations came and went. As people were getting their diplomas, they started to look around for a place to put to use their newly acquired skills.

Picture 8: One Cottage Street Building, October 2008

Several conditions were required by the former students before they could get settled into their new professional lives. First, they needed a place large enough to fit their operations as cabinet and furniture makers. Their second issue was location. They needed the place to be local. They were local to start with, that is why they had attended

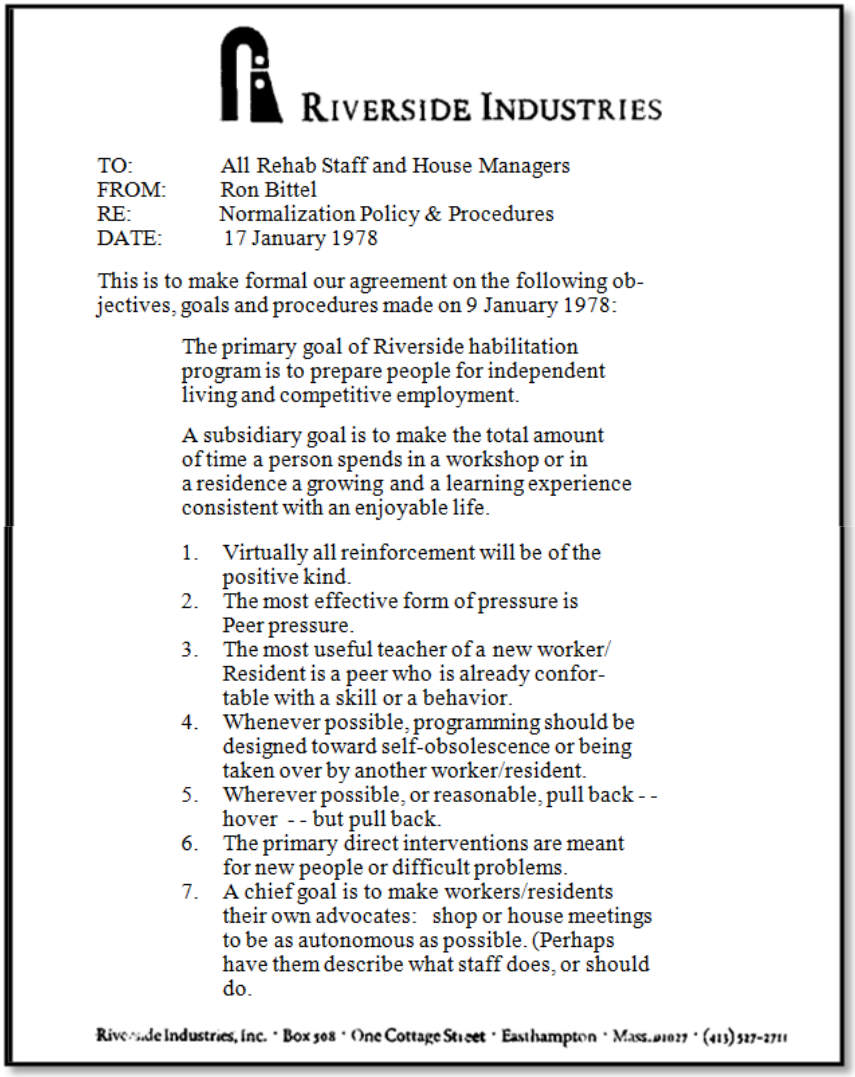
a local technical school. Another element was price. They were just starting, thus, they needed a break. And last, but not least, as it has been proven to be crucial over time, they needed access to equipment, advice and an environment just like the one that they left behind after graduating.

The answer to all these questions was right in front of them –and all around. The One Cottage Street building was still in its earlier stages and space was abundant. Deals of reduced rent in exchange for help to clean and shape up the building were the perfect conditions to get many started right after school. The access and possibility of renting their former equipment from the school, drafted several former students into the population under the One Cottage Street roof. This was, by the account of many, the seeding of the local arts and crafts community in Easthampton.

As years went by and many more tenants went in and out of the building, the collegiality of the artists and artisans in the building grew. New friendships, along with the open spirit of the Riverside Industries people, shifted the demographics of the building to a point where only artists and artisans were present. There were no official plans, no agreements or discussions with the town's government about it. It was not known that it was happening until it happened. One Cottage Street, by the end of the 1980s, was a studios and workshops Center.

Riverside Industries were happy with their tenants. They were good hearted people that were not afraid or overly conscious to have as neighbors a population with mental and physical disabilities. While the top floors were the domain of the arts and crafts industry, downstairs the therapy, job training, and occupational facilities were

constantly full with people seeking help to be incorporated into society. Having the acceptance of the upstairs artists became part of the therapy.



RIVERSIDE INDUSTRIES

TO: All Rehab Staff and House Managers
FROM: Ron Bittel
RE: Normalization Policy & Procedures
DATE: 17 January 1978

This is to make formal our agreement on the following objectives, goals and procedures made on 9 January 1978:

The primary goal of Riverside habilitation program is to prepare people for independent living and competitive employment.

A subsidiary goal is to make the total amount of time a person spends in a workshop or in a residence a growing and a learning experience consistent with an enjoyable life.

1. Virtually all reinforcement will be of the positive kind.
2. The most effective form of pressure is Peer pressure.
3. The most useful teacher of a new worker/ Resident is a peer who is already comfortable with a skill or a behavior.
4. Whenever possible, programming should be designed toward self-obsolescence or being taken over by another worker/resident.
5. Wherever possible, or reasonable, pull back - - hover - - but pull back.
6. The primary direct interventions are meant for new people or difficult problems.
7. A chief goal is to make workers/residents their own advocates: shop or house meetings to be as autonomous as possible. (Perhaps have them describe what staff does, or should do.

Riverside Industries, Inc. · Box 508 · One Cottage Street · Easthampton · Mass. 01027 · (413) 527-2711

Figure 3: Riverside Industries Original Code of Conduct for Employees that over the Years Became the Core of the Organization's and Building's Collaborative Culture. (Source: Your Riverside Connection, Fall 2003)

Artists were not only accepting their downstairs neighbors, but befriending those who had the possibility (and the ability) to wander upstairs to learn what was happening there. The relationship was not a condescending one, but an honest friendship and, eventually, collaboration. In 2006, a member of the Arts community at One Cottage

Street officially exchanged her studio space on the top floor into a classroom on the first floor. She started working for Riverside Industries and was in charge of the arts rehabilitation center –her pet project. Soon thereafter, she enrolled a roster of colleagues and friends from all over the building and others from around town to help her with the newly launched art therapy project. This art therapy project was another unexpected benefit for Riverside Industries of their location at such a building but, beyond this benefit, it was a signal legitimizing and institutionalizing the relationship between the arts and disability services. It was breaking the boundaries about who is an artist and what constitutes an artistic endeavor (See picture 9 for the Riverside Arts art exhibits listings for 2008).

Picture 9: Riverside Industries Announcement in the Spring 2008 Newsletter of the Arts Activities of their Clients

Nonetheless, there are other stories to tell about these buildings, and some are more complicated. The layout of this and other buildings harboring the artists in town was not conducive to visits and isolated them from the community. This was particularly true for One Cottage Street that grew organically and its internal partitioning was tailored to personal requirements rather than architectural planning. The outcome was a space that allowed creativity at will without interruptions. For many to create art was their livelihood hence privacy was a requirement "of the job" –as some put it in conversations. Yet, privacy was a limitation when trying to reach out to sell their work. The very same conditions that helped them to create prevented them to sell their creations.

A solution to the conundrum between the need for privacy to create and the requirements of public time to sell sprouted relatively early in the life of the arts and crafts community at One Cottage Street. In 1987, about 10 years after the building opened for the first time and about 5 years after it had a good population of artists and artisans, a small group of tenants decided to come together and become visible for one weekend a year. They met many times throughout the course of the year and by the first weekend of December, 1987, they were ready for what was the first Easthampton's Open Studios holiday sale. This arts and crafts sales event, which from its inception was foreseen as a recurrent affair, built up momentum little by little to a point where, 7 years later, in 1994 the group added another sale on the first weekend of June to make it a semi-annual event –as it is as of today.

The success of Cottage Street Winter and Summer Open Studios Sale was largely due to organizing flexibility born from close proximity and a sense of shared responsibility among peers. The common and explicit goal was the coordination of a

successful event that would account for a good financial outcome for everyone. From the very beginning the members of the group knew that a good visitors turnout would only occur if there was a sizable number of arts and crafts offerings from participants, thus collective participation was linked to individual benefits. Another requirement for success was quality. Everyone in the group was (in)formally pre-screened as an artist or artisan of merit. This in turn reinforced the sense of solidarity of the group; every artist or artisan was assessed to be a worthy peer. Another key to their success was their loosely structured governing body. Decisions were either made by a majority vote or left on the hands of the more knowledgeable in the group with the corresponding responsibility and accountability towards the rest. The latter was reinforced by the collective understanding that individual success could only come from individual triumphs and vice versa.

These dynamics were natural for this group as they were in close geographical proximity to each other and everyone had something in common with their neighbors. Everyone was an artist or artisan tenant of One Cottage Street. Furthermore everyone was, to some degree, acknowledged as a pioneer in a town that did not have an arts and crafts tradition yet. The Open Studios crowd was in all a collegial group of friends and acquaintances that, having found a common problem, were trying to solve it as a collective –after realizing their strength as a unit. All meetings were scheduled on the premises of the building as everyone was there on a regular basis and points of dissent between individuals were often solved just by walking down the hall to talk with the other members of the group.

It is worth mentioning that not all artists and artisans residents of One Cottage Street shared the same interests or vision. Hence, not all residents participated (or have participated to this day) in the Open Studios initiative. Some of the non-participants claim that this event "does not bring in their market" –this is the case for those that mostly work under commission. Others do not participate because they do not "have the time for it" –which often translates, I learned over the years, into many different things such as they could not work with the group, or they think of themselves above the quality of the group, or they have been hit by a "creativity dry spot" and have nothing to offer.

As the Open Studios Annual Sale grew popular to a point of becoming Semiannual, the demand for studio space at One Cottage Street tested the limits of the building. By 1992 the former mill factory had no more space to offer. It was hosting as many studios as it could. Although every square foot was already occupied, the phones did not stop ringing as artists and artisans from the surrounding area kept on calling asking to join the community (Boucher, 1998). Cheap rent and opportunities to be in close proximity to similar others were the incentives that kept the interests open –and the many "just in case" calls coming.

Labeled from the beginning as "carrying the arts a few steps further into the community" (Boucher, 1998), a second old factory building, Eastworks, was opened in 1997 to go where One Cottage Street could not go. Beyond the fact that Eastworks sought to offer the space that One Cottage no longer had, the plans and implementations at these two spaces were radically different. While One Cottage Street studios grew unplanned out of the financial needs of Riverside Industries (i.e., renting space on "first come, first serve" basis whether applicants were artists or not), Eastworks, located in the

old Stanley Home Products factory on Pleasant Street, was purchased by a local entrepreneur with the specific purpose of providing mixed-use space for a "community of artists, residents, entrepreneurs, non-profits, retail and more" (Eastworks History, 2009).

Picture 10: View of Eastworks Building and Parking Lot

Space at One Cottage Street was shared with the rehabilitation services, and tenant operations were not framed as a for-profit venture but as a financing source to sponsor Riverside Industries' services. This arrangement brought into play elements that would eventually take center stage in the life of the community. Whoever was to rent the space would have to be comfortable working at –and having its customers coming in through– a community of people with mental and/or physical disabilities. This shared arrangement eventually played out to be key in the self-selection of tenants as it took people and organizations of unique character and purpose to accept it. By contrast, at Eastworks the venture was "professionally handled." Considered from the beginning as a real estate management business, operations were set to be pleasant and efficient without

disruptions. Well divided and defined spaces along with a screening process for tenants ensured a safe haven for business where customers and clients of the tenants would never feel "uncomfortable."

Following its impromptu nature, studio spaces at One Cottage Street were rented by the square foot and walls were tailored to the tenants' needs. This "architectural style" resulted in the maze-like feeling of the place. Different from this, at Eastworks the Master Plan approach dictated that everything had its place and if it did not have it, then it did not fit in. Long hallways of parallel walls and uniform doors became its hallmark. Yet the more important difference was not evident and only came across after stepping back, talking to people, and walking the places. At One Cottage, artists were breaking ground and building community as they went along. Learning about the place and its possibilities (i.e., affordable studios within a growing arts community) was, for some time, a word-of-mouth process among friends and acquaintances. The arrangements of sharing the space with Riverside Industries, the owner of the building, and its clients, people with disabilities, served to filter the constituency of tenants. Meanwhile, at Eastworks the process was a commercial venture framed by marketing campaigns that sold to a local arts and crafts community; a place to reach peers and to network. Artists were moving into a well defined building structure and a somehow already proven arts community. Space was set and ready and information about it was spread through commercial channels bringing strangers with different interests and backgrounds together.

Picture 11: Information from Eastworks Home page at www.eastworks.com Advertising Mix Use Space for Rent Framing the Comercial Nature of its Goals

Further, as the One Cottage Street community grew strong and consolidated its role in Easthampton, the Eastworks group, from its insertion, sought to build on the One Cottage success to sprint ahead. The Eastworks strategy at its core was simple; start where One Cottage stopped, keep going after they could no longer do it, do what they were not capable of accomplishing. One Cottage Street was zoned as a business and manufacture area but it did not have a residential permit. This allowed it to open its doors to artists to all kinds –including those that used heavy and noisy equipment– yet it prevented the building from guaranteeing a "local" rooting. Eastworks as a first step secured a mixed use permit. This opened the opportunity to having working studios and living quarters in the same place. Artists and artisans at Eastworks were sold to the idea of having homes within a creative community. The top floor of the building; the fourth

floor, was set aside for lofts for artists where homes and studios would blend to meet the residents' artistic needs. This plan, sellers speculated, would further incorporate artists and artisans as part of the local community –which was not truly happening at the other place, where most of the tenants were commuters.

While the Eastworks project's overall business strategy was being implemented, incoming occupants had their own personal agendas and plans. Tenants were signing their contracts not only to get premium studios at affordable prices but they were seeking access to local talent and relationships –as presented in the marketing campaigns and mentioned in the arts circles. They knew about One Cottage Street's already established community of artist and artisans and they were hoping to capitalize on it. Meanwhile, already local artists and artisans were looking for similar others to establish nurturing relationships and grow professionally. Their first targets were their soon to be next door neighbors at Eastworks. The well structured building's plan promised space for forty-five livable studios on the fourth floor and additional studio units zoned only for work and not for residence on the floors below.

Yet the arrival of neighboring colleagues was not immediate, nor were their relationships that easy to establish. Furthermore, the newcomers in town starting to spend time in the community soon realized about the need of outlets to promote and sell their work. The impact and strength that would come with the well established arts community was not present yet for them to use –or at least not at Eastworks. However, in the same way that the business plan at Eastworks was inspired by the ongoing "business" activities at One Cottage Street, the new residents at Eastworks tapped on the "fame and efforts" of artists and artisans at One Cottage Street.

By 1998 the already semiannual Open Studios sale of One Cottage Street was an excellent opportunity for the newcomers to promote their work. People from Eastworks approached residents at One Cottage Street and asked for an opportunity (and space) to exhibit and sell their work at the semiannual sale. Others simply posted signs on the road saying "more art ahead." While the easiest tactic was the posting of signs, this was not the best strategy since the "perpetrators" were soon labeled as free loaders and this practice would damage their local social capital in the process. Yet, collaborators were always welcome. Anyone approaching the One Cottage community asking for space was always welcome as long as the person would follow the organizing rules of the event.

In a few words, the rules required everyone to participate in the promotion and preparation efforts of the event by supplying cash to cover expenses, or in kind (including labor), or both. Equally important was that participation was limited to artists or artisans promoting their own work. Additionally, a tacit rule called for an "in-house sponsor" –as I learned talking to some artists. "*You just don't want anyone to set his tent here [at the semiannual Open Studios Arts Sale]*" –one artist said to me at one point– "*we are a community, you know, and we need to know if we can work together with that person*" – she added referring to all the behind the scenes work that goes into having the event ready.

As time went by, participation in the Semiannual Sale of other artists and artisans not members of the One Cottage Street community became normal and many other small studios around town started to schedule their sales on the same weekend or around it. The presence of town-wide events promoting the collaboration of the arts community

served as a bridging process that brought together the different arts and artisans' constituencies around town.

Picture 12: December 2009 One Cottage Street Open Studios Sales Announcement

The surge of art related activities supported by the regular presence of artists and artisans around town prompted the town's major to comment on "*the possibility that Easthampton might become better known for its association with the arts*" (Boucher, 1998). This statement was recorded in a 1998 interview. Yet this comment was almost a

lip service on the context of the article promoting the arts revival in Easthampton. In the same year, at the Decennial Master Plan Meeting this idea was absent and the voices of artists and artisans were not included. Nevertheless the local arts community was growing strong at its different poles (e.g., One Cottage Street, Eastworks) despite the fact that the constituency at each place had its own common interests and agendas that were not always shared across their locations.

Year after year the Open Studio sales also grew stronger. More people around town got involved and more artists and artisans were opening their doors to the public in general. Yet its organizing was still "organic." The coordination of efforts was happening within the networks at each building and not through the network across town, hence efforts were oftentimes duplicated or ignored. As a result of all this organizing, the town was also going through a transformation. The number of artists and artisans along with their actions had changed the local dynamics. By doing so, they had called attention upon themselves. Local government and governing bodies did not know what to do about the local artists and artisans presence and some still wanted to bring the town back into its "normality" as a former mill town by seeking conventional venues of socioeconomic renaissance.

Picture 13: Local Artist / Graphic designer / Charrette Member During the Summer 2005 Open Studios Event

Yet, starting in 2003 an annual event called the Windows Project put the arts in the context of everyday life by transforming local business into art galleries for a month. This event was successful due to the participation, sometimes contested and contradictory, of local businesses and many artists from the town and its surrounding communities. This project positioned all kind of collaborations among members of the community as part of everyday life –along with the exhibited art. At the same time groups of artists and artisans living and/or working around town were becoming aware of their numbers but, more important yet, of their relationships with each other and their shared interests. As a result of the mounting awareness the need to institutionalize their relationships was born at multiple places around the town and through multiple interpretations. It was time to create a governing structure for the already in place local arts and artisans community.

Two main organizing events unfolded at this point (2004-2005) and shared some of its constituency. Their domains of interest were similar; both were focused on coordinating the arts community and taking advantage of its numeric strength. But their goals were different; one group sought to coordinate sales while the other intended to make a local inventory of talent and make it available to the world. The group with the sales focus, started in March 2004, was ArtsEasthampton (one word) while the group with the coordinating focus, first discussed among artists in February-April 2005, was later called Easthampton City Arts (ECA) at its official inception a couple of months later in the same year.

What was I doing there?

I entered this picture in 2005 –two years before the Master Plan in town that included the arts was crafted. I was sitting at the table in a conference room in the new government building in town. It was at a meeting to plan for the town's arts' Charrette. Prominent members of the town were getting worried about the presence and role of the artists as part of the town's everyday life. The meeting was scheduled in the afternoon, after office hours, so it was easy for everyone to attend. Yet there were not enough artists and artisans in the room –nor were they fully engaged in the process. The atmosphere soon became tense as the sense of contradictory agendas and lack of understandings became evident. The idea of "them" the artists, versus "us" the town permeated the conversations. "*What do you want from us?*" –one of the artists at the meeting asked point blank. With this question he challenged the intrinsic idea of artists and artisans as passive executors of positive socioeconomic change.

The purpose of my research was neither to examine an exhaustive set of artists and artisans, nor to select a small number of persons to follow around for extended periods. The idea behind my work was to gain considerable insight into the way artists and artisans, exemplar members of the creative class by many accounts (e.g., Florida, 2002a; Gibson & Kong, 2005), relate to each other and affect (or don't affect) their community. Thus, the object of interest was the processes among local artists and artisans when interacting with each other and with other members of the community at different moments and locations.

This criterion served to prioritize my participation at local events when overlapped scheduling took place. The conflict of schedules and my need to prioritize provided a unique window into how artists and artisans made their own decisions to attend these events –what was the most salient event to participate? –was my constant worry. I learned early on in my project that this was a significant issue as I was included in the internal email distribution list for the local Cultural Council. "*I'm sorry I cannot make tonight's meeting*", *"[…] sorry couldn't make it to the meeting, what happened?*", "*apparently we don't have enough quorum, we need to re-schedule*" or "*I'll be a few minutes late*" –yet never arriving– are examples of some of the not that infrequent one liner emails that I would receive from members of the Arts Council. This issue –not infrequently– would escalate to a point where discussions about sending out letters of resignation took place. As the former Chair of the council bluntly put it in one of her emails to all members of the council at that time; "*[…] when people don't show up to meetings we can just 'kick them off*'." From these situations my early learning was to show commitment and consistency in my participation if I wanted to be well received.

Overall, I spent over 4 years in the field collecting data, at monthly meetings, especial events and social gatherings (from February 2005 to May 2009) with a progressive focus centering on my object of interest. (See Appendix B for a description of the ethnographic data collection)

As I was interested in exploring how artists and artisans relate to each other and affect (or don't affect) their community, I initially targeted for observation the public meetings and events held by the local planning office and the Easthampton Cultural Council (ECC). I started to attend their meetings in April, 2005. From their records and my ethnographic observations I learned that the ECC had only included 2 non-artists in its total accumulated membership of over 20 people during the 2003 to 2009 period. Its heavy roster of artists and artisans was a direct result of its ongoing tacit goals that on June 20, 2007 –after 2 months of conversations– were finally defined as a mission that reads as follows:

> *"[T]o distribute funds made available through the Massachusetts Cultural Council (ECC). This funding supports innovative and diverse cultural programs and activities dedicated to enhancing and guaranteeing public access to the arts and humanities within the community. The goal of the ECC is to raise awareness and provide outreach regarding the grant process and to encourage individuals, groups, and organizations to apply for funding of cultural activities that benefit and enrich the citizens of Easthampton."*

This mission resulted from the need to have a unified understanding of what the council was all about. It was crafted as the external locus of control to have a consensual guideline for the action of the council. Its development was not an overnight accomplishment. It took multiple interactions, mostly by email and casual conversations around town. Through this process every effort was made to echo all the participants' understandings of the council. Its crafting became a task of self-discovery as an organization. This happened at the time when conversations about the ECC joining efforts with Easthampton City Arts (ECA) to promote arts and culture in town were started. For instance, at some point, the ECA provided a grant to paint a mural on one of the buildings in town. While the process was transparent and did not bring much attention at first, it was the news coverage of it that made it more relevant and made people in the city aware of it.

Picture 14: Mural on Cottage Street, across from the old theatre on the side of Whiskerz Pub. Funded by Easthampton City Arts with the support of the Massachusetts Cultural Council, The Williston Northampton School and Hampton Wholesale Auto, LLC

Thus, both the statement and the conversations to join efforts became a tool to clarify the ECC role in town and to identify the level of involvement to be expected by its members. Extra efforts were made to understand what else was for them to be done besides making and disbursing grants. As one member of the council put it on an email during the conversations on an early version of the document; *"[t]his statement addresses grants only, what else do we want to include in our mission....if anything?"* At the end, the artists and artisans at the council acquired a dual agenda; at one level they sought to collaborate with other organizations to promote the arts while they presented themselves to the public in general as grant givers. The partnering with ECA that was enacted as a result of this task was not a consolidation but the sharing of resources and responsibilities.

Before this articulation of objectives, the unified views about ECC activities and its role in the community could be summarized on its standard and cheerful mottos "*we give money away!*", and "*we support the local arts!*" ECC meetings usually focus on selecting grant recipients. Because of this emphasis on grants, street-talk about the ECC focuses on money. As the former Chair woman of the council often said "*we [the ECC] are the sugar daddies of the arts.*" This scenario may suggest a strong involvement of the artists in the council and a constant flow of volunteers, yet this is not the case.

Since the council's bylaws requires a minimum quorum to operate, its members regularly conduct informal recruiting sessions around town, through the local Art Walk, and when promoting the annual grants. From early on, in Art Walk events, ECC members (re)presented themselves as the local patrons for the arts –consistently with the early developed understanding of who they were as an organization. The elevator pitch

focused on new friendships and popularity connected to membership at the council. Fellow artists, they argued to those who would stop to ask about "the membership", would fight each other to be in your good grace as they learn about your "connections" with the council. "*Who doesn't want to have a friend that hands out money?*" – a member of the council retorted with a theatrical voice that filled the space at the June 2008 Art Walk. Not only was she addressing a curious woman who just stopped by, but she was also promoting the council to a passerby. This Cultural Council member knows the recruiting game too well. While she is an actor and a director, her "*day time job*", as she calls it, is as a Dean at the School of Arts at a local Community College.

More recently, starting in July 2009, the council ran for a couple of months an announcement in the Valley Arts Newsletter inviting people to be part of the council. The message, once again, portrayed the ECC's functions as both giving money "*We distribute grant money from the Massachusetts Cultural Council to local artists in the visual and performing arts*" –and working with other art related local organizations– "*We participate in the monthly Art Walk, coordinate with Easthampton City Arts, and support other community arts activities.*"

Other collateral benefits casually, but repeatedly, mentioned by ECC members to artists and artisans targeted as prospective members of the council include direct relationships to top government officials and other local interests groups –all extensions of the idea of networking in town. As the current head of the council have repeated in several occasions while referring to benefits of being part of ECC; "*it's a win-win.*" Why is any of this remarkable may become clear next.

More Windows Into the Town

In 2005 as I started to observe the town I came across the Windows Project. This endeavor, which started in 2003, was the brainchild initiative of the –at that time– Chair of the ECC. Its aim was "*to expand and promote the arts in Easthampton.*" The project was a once a year, one month long event, organized and sponsored by members of the local Cultural Council. Its strategy was, as it read on the 2006 call to artists, "*Transforming downtown Easthampton into ONE BIG ART GALLERY.*" As such, it consisted on making of the town's public spaces and business an art exhibit –inasmuch as possible. The idea was to open spaces to creativity and allow the existence of the arts outside the museums –as the participants and volunteers discussed among them via email exchanges in preparation for the event.

While this project was a nice and strong way to bring visibility to local art and artists it was a hard sell to the local arts community as it required from them to work months in advance and their integration within local business –the main exhibit areas– was never straightforward. Yet the Windows Project had been happening for several years by the time of my arrival and appeared to be "socially entrenched" in the community –but it was not so as I soon learned.

Picture 15: Luthiers Co-op store during the 2005 Windows Project

The 2006 Windows Project had a hard start. Artists were not happy with their experiences from the previous year. Problems had been accumulating and even the best efforts to fix them by drafting contracts regulating the relationships between artists and business did not truly work. As one of the invited artists put it in her response to the invitation for the 2006 event "*[…] I had a pretty bad experience last year doing the Windows Project and I don't think I want to participate […].*" She was not the only one with a negative experience as implied in the email response that she got from the organizers of the 2006 event. "*Your experience last year was complete bull shit and frankly was a huge motivator for me to shift the organizing/curating focus to a new 'vested interest' group of artists and art lovers*". Yet, as the 2006 event unfolded more personality issues arose and more logistic problems became evident. The strong personality of the chair of the council that served to push forward the idea at the

beginning became a liability as people felt constantly confronted when talking to her. Moreover, the imminent ending of her tenure as the Chair of the Cultural Council with the consequently lost of power did not help.

Additionally, the emergence of a new organization, the Art Walk, that proposed to do a similar event as the Windows Project but with a structure that better allowed the coordination and integration of a larger base of volunteers marked the end of the Windows Project. While the latter depended on one person's work and strong will to coordinate everything, the Art Walk allowed for the integration of multiple volunteers, minimized the requirements on business owners and encouraged more casual and personal exchanges. Whereas the Windows Project used mediators / curators to allocate art to places, the new organization required the direct relationship between business and artists making of the event a partnership rather than an enforced relationship. But the more pertinent issue of all was that the Windows Project had a hard time finding volunteers and collaborators and required a full year of work devoted to its organization. In contrast, the Art Walk, a grassroots undertaking using social media tools, was started with a group of volunteers and donations that allowed it to operate from day one and to hold monthly events.

Even when the Art Walk's original idea was, as stated by the organizers, "*[…] not to compete or take anything away from Windows [Project]. In fact we believe they can reinforce each other […]*" –at the end it took over the Windows Project. By 2007 the Windows Project was just last year's memory. The Art Walk had used the Windows Project human capital and had taken advantage of its social momentum. The Art Walk immediate success was feasible because the Windows Project had preceded it and it held

similar ideas and values, yet it was sustainable because it was not like the Windows Project as it depended on the strength of many rather than the personality of one.

The Windows Project was a grassroots born organization that became centralized and relied on strict rules to function and, because of that, wrestled to get artists and artisans involved. This movement disappeared with the emergence of the Art Walk. The Art Walk tried to overcome the Windows Project major problems; getting artists involved and coordinating venues through a new approach; empowerment of participants and the use of digital social media such as web pages, Facebook and email distribution lists. While the Windows project worked by curating the exhibits (a committee evaluated artistic merit of submissions and pair matched artists with business), the Art Walk relies on the sum of individuals working as a collective effort to function (artists individually engage venues around town and negotiate for themselves the use of time and space using only the Art Walk as a collective branding / promoter). While both organizations worked on the premises of volunteers helping to implement walk-around the town art exhibits, the end results reflected their different approaches. The Windows Project used businesses' front windows to exhibit art, instead the Art Walk fosters social and economic movement around town. The Windows Project is dead, long live the Art Walk.

Starting in October, 2006, the Art Walk events take place every second Saturday of every month and consist of the use of local business and public spaces to host public, and free art exhibits and performances. Their idea is to stage and open town so people can "walk" around, enjoy themselves, consume at local businesses and, why not, purchase local arts and crafts. Local business owners love the concept of increased foot

traffic on weekends, while town officials think of it as a good promotion and evidence of their good policies.

Nevertheless, not all monthly events are equally good as artists are not always on hand to participate. The local Cultural Council has taken as its (partnering) responsibility to find at least one single artist a month that is willing to participate in the Art Walk so the ECC's office can be listed as a destination in the event. By doing so, they are promoting the Old Town Hall as a local arts center and –more important for them– they advertise the ECC's work and recruit new members. However, finding a willing artist or artisan to be there for the ECC has been so far time consuming, and oftentimes daunting. Multiple personal and cold calls, followed by a series of negotiations, can only do the trick so many times. It is not unusual for members of the council, most of them artists and artisans in their own right, to have to fill in these monthly spots. Jazz singing, children activities, decorate your bike contests, and charcoal painting on the sidewalk are just some of the tricks that they had come up with to make up for the lack of volunteers, even when participating in the event means free state-wide publicity and an extra line in the participating artist's resume.

Picture 16: Facebook Picture of the Side Walk Chalk Painting event that took place at the June 2008 Art Walk

Moving Along…

I observed much of these happenings first-hand. I participated at the artists and artisans' annual sales and Open Studio events, gallery openings and public exhibits including the Windows Project, the Art Walk and, more recently, the Bear Fest. It was through these engagements that I cemented my role as a regular attendee and observer of the art related events and gatherings. "*Do you have any pictures to share from our ice-cream social?*" –I was asked at one of the council meetings late in 2006 confirming their open and candid acknowledgement of my role as their observer. Later, as the research progressed and I became more familiar with the community, this resulted in additional venues for observation opening up to me.

Picture 17: Easthampton Cultural Council Ice-cream Social September 2006

Since the town was in close proximity to my own home (25 minutes by car), I was able to spend extended periods of time walking around town, having lunch at different locations and casually shopping for arts and crafts from the community when I needed gifts –Christmas time and Open Studio days were particularly good for my research as artists and artisans would open their studios to the public and, as I was a shopper, some would feel more receptive to talk with me for the first time. All this enabled me to become more familiar with the town and the arts community as well as to better understand the observed processes.

I allowed the creative class processes to be defined by those who participated in them. Only the processes that involved at least one artist and/or artisan member of the local community and/or were framed under the local arts creativity domain were investigated. Since my aim was to explore socioeconomic relationships, I assumed that even artists who "create" alone, still held relationships with other individuals and were affected by (and affected) processes in the community. I also wanted to consider within

my observations a balance of "professional" artists where art and/or crafts are their livelihood and "non-professional" artists where arts and crafts may just be hobbies and/or personal practices.

Some people believe that you are born an artist, while others believe that you are trained to become one. In town, in particular among the artists and artisans, this conversation often took a more subtle tone; "*I'm a trained artist*", "*I'm a professional painter*" were casually thrown expressions, and exemplars of recurrent themes within conversations among them and with me about their merit and identity as an artist –the idea was that if you are not schooled in the arts you are just a good intended hobbyist. On the other side of the argument, phrases such as "*you have it or you don't*" and "*I was born with the eye for it*" were not uncommon either. These exchanges were particularly prominent when issues about curating exhibits and allocating art related grants were central –"*you just don't give money for that!"* was a recurring idea when applications were rejected. The middle ground, although not that frequently, was also present; "*I'm a self-taught artist*" was also heard, simultaneously conveying a pride for a life-style choice yet presenting a tacit apology about quality and/or lack of formal education. These issues became more relevant as I spent more time talking with people around town.

A sense of ownership and locality always permeated and mediated the conversations about the arts and crafts in town. "*We want local involvement*", "*if you want our money, you need to know who we are (as a community)*", or "*I bet you that they just put a ton of those applications out to see which one gets funded!*" –were common expressions when talking about other artists wanting to perform in town or seeking local

funding or partners. To be an artist is not enough; you have to have a local tie as well –I learned.

By not taking sides on the nature versus nurture argument, and taking advantage of the local-pride concept, I was able to follow artists and artisans that belonged to this community, regardless of their types and/or level of involvement in the arts, and/or personal understandings of it. The combination of these different perspectives provided me with a unique opportunity to pursue my interest in their organizing and observe them as they went through their daily lives. Furthermore, the heterogeneous nature of the observed participants sharing the same community as the context of their lives allowed me to explore how the local socioeconomic context affected the individuals' organizing choices, and vice versa. In short, not trying to "talk" about how a creative class was "crafted" by its members, but focusing on how artists and artisans organized at the local level, offered a glimpse into a new interpretation of extant literature.

Entering Organizations Seeking Organizing

By 2006, as I ran into my second year in the field, I became more familiar with this town (and the people in town became familiar with me). I had compiled a list of places, organizations and events where artists or artisans were present, and/or where issues of the arts and culture were part of the core agenda. The list, following my epistemological perspective, served as a map to extend my reach as I telephoned, emailed and met with members of the board of local organizations, organizational representatives, event coordinators, and select participants at community-wide events. Every time that I contacted someone I would broadly explained the goals of my project –"*I just want to understand the role of the artists and artisans in town*", I would advance as I did not

wanted them (as much as possible) to "perform" for me. I just wanted to observe and learn from their doings. After that I would ask about the possibility of attending the events and/or their meetings –"*so, if it is not a problem with you, or any of the other members of the group/organization, I would like to sit at you meetings and take notes*"– I would say.

At publicly held and/or officially sanctioned events sponsored and/or organized by the town's government, I would consistently be informed that I needed no special authorization to attend –"*just show up, this is a publicly held meeting*" I heard over and over to each one of my informal and official requests. Asking authorizations to attend private meetings, events or reunions for other organizations around town was not much of a problem either. My requests were regularly done through referrals or at other meetings where I would meet the members of the targeted organization –hence they would have evidence of the nature of my interest and my level of involvement and commitment. Yet, to make a point, whenever possible, I introduced myself and my purpose for attending the event. This last helped me to avoid misrepresentations of my persona or interests –and made me trustworthy in informal conversations with meeting participants. Eventually, I did not need to introduce myself as others would introduce me to the group and vouch for me. "*He is our resident sociologist*" I will be jokingly introduced, over and over, by the latest Arts Council Chairwoman at meetings and public events where we would coincide. And with this she would validate my presence and would give me the credentials to overhear conversations and discussions or to ask follow up questions.

In total, I contacted 1 informal and 17 formal organizations. I was granted access to all 18 of them. I frequently observed and participated in 8 of these organizations /

events, I seldom observed 5 and I was sporadically present at the events of the last 4. Nevertheless, I was able to hold casual conversations with the members of all 18 organizations, (See Table 2 for the full list of organizations and activities).

Table 2: Name, type and the frequency of my attendance at the meetings of the observed organizations

			Frequency of My Attendance			
	Organization's Name	**Type**	**Frequent**	**Seldom**	**Sporadic**	**Removed**
1	FlyWheel	Grassroots			X	
2	Pioneer Arts Center of Easthampton (PACE)	Non-profit		X		
3	Open Studios, One Cottage Street	Grassroots		X		
4	The Arts Easthworks	Grassroots	X			
5	The Windows Project (WP)	Grassroots / Governmental	X			
6	Nashawannuck gallery	For Profit	X			
7	Easthampton City Arts (ECA)	Non-profit		X		
8	Easthampton Cultural Council (ECC)	Governmental	X			
9	The ArtsWalk	Grassroots	X			
10	Easthampton Master Plan Executive Committee (EMPEC)	Government / Grassroots	X			
11	Easthampton Master Plan Open Spaces & Art Committee (EMPOAC)	Government / Grassroots	X			
12	The Arts Charrette	Government / Grassroots	X			
13	The Town Hall Conversion Project	Government / Grassroots			X	
14	The Daughters of Dada	Grassroots				X
15	Cultural Conversations (ECA-ECC)	Governmental / Non-profit		X		
16	Art Therapy	Non-profit			X	
17	Elusie gallery	For Profit		X		
18	Bear Fest	Grassroots			X	
			8	5	4	1

It is worth mentioning, as I have earlier stated, that my patterns of observation and participation reflected the activities of the majority of the members of the community that I observed. The only person that attended more events than I did was, as she described

herself, “independently wealthy” and felt that she had a “civic duty” within the community to attend these events. Thus, she made her “job” to be active in the local art community, helping it wherever and whenever necessary (Field notes Easthampton Cultural Council, 2008). Her perspective towards her involvement, while extreme, was not uncommon. In general, participants addressed their public involvement as a “civic duty”, “community debt”, or alike giving a sense of responsibility while opening the exit door once “the debt” was repaid as I saw it happened in more than one occasion. “*[…] with all the things going, I had already capped my community time for the year*” was thrown at one of the council meetings, in May 2007, by one of the participants to explain why she was not going to be able to help in one of the Art Walks for a while –everyone in the room nodded in agreement and no further explanations were required.

Other individuals with longer records of attendance only turned out for short periods of time, after which they either stopped participating altogether or went back to more sporadic attendance before interrupting their involvement. Getting people involved on regular basis was an issue that later I realized was prominent to most of the art related and/or volunteer supported organizations around town. “*You have to be careful when you get people involved*”– told me the town planner when I asked him about scheduling meetings and getting public support –“if *there are too many meetings not everyone could or want to be bothered*”– he concluded. This was a frequently offered –one way or another– as an alternative explanation to the lack of participation; “*people have other places to go to”* without asking about the nature of these other events. The tacit assumption was, overall, that people was interested in these issues hence those who

wanted and could participate would show up; it was just a matter of proper scheduling and not tiring people with too many demands.

In all, looking at why people participated in the different civic and grassroots organizations around town, or volunteered for public events, helped me to explore the plurality of life in the community. Some talked about civic duties –as previously discussed. Other artists and artisans referred to participation in these organizations as their "social art". Others have personal and private reasons that reflected their family life such as limitations due to children or elder care.

As my focus was the artists and artisans, and their organizing, the "sample" for this project was defined as the events within the community that engaged artists and artisans from the community. Once I made my choices about the events where I could participate, my focus became, on one hand, the event itself (e.g., who organized it and what was the purpose of the event), and, on the other hand, the artists and artisans that were present (e.g., who was present, why artists and artisans attended and how they related to others during the event).

Most of the participants at all the events were members of the local community. For government related events, such as the Easthampton Cultural Council or the Easthampton Master Plan meetings, it was required to have a legal residence in town to have a voice and a vote, but not to attend as they were, by law, open to the general public –as I was told by the town planner and later confirmed by the former Chair of the Arts Council. This facilitated my role as an observer, yet at some point I was offered the opportunity to actively participate by getting a postal box in town –I rejected the offer as it could have presented me with a conflict of interest.

The non-official activities, meetings and events were also open to the public and the level of my participation was determined by the enthusiasm and commitment of the attendees and organizers, as well as the relationship of the events to my sphere of interest. It should be noted that there were no official limitations or guidelines to attend these non-official activities, meetings and events. The major restriction to participate in them, besides an early request to participate, was to learn about their scheduling well in advance. These activities were frequently scheduled on short or extremely short notice – e.g., when members would find each other on the street and would decide to meet that evening. "*We need to meet, do you have plans for this evening*" –would precede the scheduling of a meeting in the evening. Likewise, unofficial routines, such as the unscheduled but regularly held encounters / meetings over breakfast by members of the Planning board oftentimes proved to be problematic to be observed.

The other problem I encountered was the concatenation of activities, meetings or events. The announcements and schedules of the future meetings were typically made at the end of the previous session; therefore, missing an event could entail missing a series of events. To aggravate this, it was not uncommon that because of shared constituencies across organizations some of the events of a particular group were scheduled at the end of the meetings of another association. For instance, the *Natural, Cultural & Historic Resources/ Open Space & Recreation* subcommittee would often schedule its activities and meetings at the end of the *Master Plan Meetings*. To compensate for missing events I requested access to internal records, subscribed to newsletters and distribution lists and engaged in casual conversations with activity participants around town.

Most of the attendees to the meetings and events organized by the groups included in this project had professional and/or personal engagements during the day – many artist and artisans will moonlight their artistic endeavors, especially if they were not "professional artists". As a consequence most of the activities were scheduled on weekends or during the evenings. The only exception to this pattern was the Easthampton City Arts that initially scheduled its meetings towards the middle of the day, or during lunch time. However, they eventually moved their starting time towards the end of the business day.

In Appendix E I describe the composition and goals of the organizations. There I list the organizations and brief descriptions of their goals and participants as clean categories, but, as I will discuss later, organizing processes within a community are not so easily defined and sorted. For example, somebody might ask, "How many artists do you have in Nashawannuck gallery?" I could answer that in several ways. I can report, as I did in Appendix E, that this organization has 1 to 6 artists at any given time. These numbers will reflect art as professional endeavors, where the "artists" get paid for their work. Nevertheless, this does not mean that art may only exist as part of the artist or artisan's livelihood. For many artists, art is not their livelihood. When I asked my point of contact at the Easthampton City Arts if she could make a living as an artist she said; "*I wish I could!*"

She works 3 to 4 days a week at the Easthampton City Arts office covering the administrative duties and contacting artists, artisans and sponsors (tentative patrons for the local arts). The other days and during the evenings she paints and does quilting that sells on her websites and during the Open Studios events. Many other artists around

town, including several members of the Easthampton Cultural Council, have "day jobs" to pay their bills and only profit from art to finance further artistic pursuits –at best. Thus, the understanding of art under purely economic terms will reveal a different number of artists, than if you were to ask "are you an artist?" Besides, many artists and artisans do art as a lifestyle not for the profit of it. The person at the planning office in charge of grants in town started to take her art "seriously" in 1999 –i.e., she makes money out of it– yet it is neither her livelihood nor the money in itself the reason for her art. "*Flowers give me joy and a sense of peace. Capturing their beauty in a photograph allows me to hold on to that joy and to share it with other*" –is her statement about why she takes pictures of flowers.

Picture 18: Ellen Koteen
Morning Dew, 2002

Further, when I began my observations some organizations had a smaller number of artists and a larger number of non-artists, yet, without changing its membership roster, many of them have more artists, as people had "discovered" that they were artists, or have finally allowed themselves time to devote to the arts. Also, as time elapses things change. People come and go and change interests and associations, thus changing memberships. Nevertheless, institutions tend to stay. Issues of familiarity and affinity serve to attract new members to help pursue organizational goals when people leave. Change may occur and organizations may disappear, but these changes are not always as immediate as someone leaving town.

To explore local organizing implied trying to answer; why do people live in this town? There was no easy answer. Many artists spoke of a collegial environment and the opportunity to have a bucolic lifestyle. Others talked about cheap housing and studio spaces, and the hopes to move away as soon as they "get a break". Others did not think of the place in terms of lifestyle, or professional business, but as the space where they have always lived, thus, they kept on living in town because they never considered leaving it in the first place.

Underlying arguments about positive socioeconomic change linked to artists and artisans living in a locality may not be the natural state of affairs. Artists tend to foster change; however, it is change under their own terms. What is good for some may not be good for others. Artists explore, critique, record and disrupt our social ethos by breaking the "habitualization" and bringing new eyes to old views (Shklovsky, 1965). Their views are not always what the rest of the community wants to hear (or is ready for). For instance, the former head of the Cultural Council, a local artist, uses "recovered items"

(i.e., trash) to create art that raises awareness about waste. Her home studio is full of "material" that disrupts the life in her building as her treasures (other people's trash) accumulate. Likewise, other artists around town have made of their art (and personal) agenda to preserve open spaces in response to a local construction boom in 2003-2004. They pursued this by forming a non-profit organization to gather funds, lobby and raise local awareness about the depletion of local natural resources. The artists' actions questioning (and oftentimes opposing) the nature and location of these new urban developments in town had unsettled the industrial and urban planning, as their actions slowed, and in some cases stopped, new constructions around town.

Learning to Behave While Exploring and Making Friends

Members of the organizations in this study allowed me to attend their meetings and be present at their events, as stated previously. To be accepted in many cases became a moral contract where I was expected to attend in a more or less regular basis. Additionally it meant that I should comply with the organizations' tacit rules of participation that included when to attend, when I was allowed to record, and even where I should sit.

An example of the above was my engagement with the Cultural Council. At their meetings I would usually arrive before they started and left with the one closing the room. Arriving 5 to 10 minutes earlier allowed me to see how people "arrived" and "socialized" before "business had started." I documented when people arrived, where they sat, what was said by whom and what kind of responses a particular comment brought about from others. Leaving at the end gave me a window into how some tricky

issues of social dynamics unfolded and were planned. "The devil is in the details" and details were often discussed before and after meetings.

When I arrived at meeting places, I first scanned it in search of an unobtrusive place for me to sit and observe. Yet those where not the places where I would always be, even when I sat there at the beginning –"*move here Arturo, here is a seat*" was a phrase that became more common as time elapsed and I was accepted by members of the council. After the Cultural Council moved its offices to the Old Town Hall building, in January 2008, there was no other place for me to be but at the table because of the room's layout and the familiarity of my presence at the meetings. It is around that time that I was even invited to be a member of the council; "*Arturo, you are always here you should be in the council*", half joking, half serious became a regular comment at the meetings for a while. This familiarity allowed me to get socially closer to the conversations and get a better understanding of the topics. Yet, the very same closeness that earlier got me into the organizations at times tested my ability to be in the field and observe without losing my perspective –or at least forced me to acknowledge my precarious condition as an observer.

When participating in art related activities that were not meetings, such as the Art Walk, Bear Fest or the Charrette itself, I arrived early enough to get a "lay of the land". Often times, I helped with the preparations, not by offering ideas, but by doing as I was told, such as moving tables and chairs or placing posters and charts on the walls. "*Good to have you here!*" was not an uncommon expression at some events as they knew that I would help. I mounted posters for the Charrette, moved chairs and tables at social gatherings and removed nails from the floors in the Old Town Hall building during the

renovations –to name some of my hands on involvement. This always brought me good will. It allowed me the chance to get a sense of membership in the community and become familiar with what it meant to work with artists and artisans beyond the glorified views of success –"*I want to see them doing this*", and "*I hope they'll appreciate the effort*" were not uncommon comments at the Art Walk during the pre-exhibits and/or pre-show preparations. During my observations I would move through the space as the events progressed and documented people and their actions. In small meetings and gatherings this meant "*to work the floor*" –as some of the artists called this moving around the exhibit during the openings trying to get a sense of what people thought of their work. At the Art Walk or the Open Studios this "working the floor" meant to go from venue to venue, from studio to studio. As I moved around, sometimes I would stop at incidents or conversations that were relevant for my project while trying not to lose track of the big picture. This was easier in small gatherings than when covering events like the Windows Project or the Art Walk where I would have to navigate the whole town. At these large events I would address each studio or exhibit as a unit at first and then I would think of it in the context of the whole event. Additionally, I took pictures and drew spatial maps when possible. I carried my digital recorder with me and used it whenever possible as I talked to people.

Most of the people did not mind me recording meetings and public events. "*These are public sessions*" –the town planner told me about all events that were town sponsored or organized –"*you can record the sessions*" he added. This feeling was echoed in most places. At the Cultural Council my recording was put to a vote and accepted under the premise that there were moments that were not part of the sessions

hence not to be recorded. This was a task in itself; to understand when people were acting publicly; performing their roles, and when they were their private persona. At times, this would change in a seconds notice and was marked by changes in voice intonation or nervous giggling.

While "public spaces" (understood by all around town as the public performing of officially organized events) were ok, side conversations at those events and/or one-to-one moments made people weary and, from time to time, I was asked to turn off the recorder. Those "private" conversations were confident moments that framed some of my understandings beyond the obvious, i.e., personal problems, change in jobs, commentary of other person's intentions or personality, were not uncommon themes at these moments. Those conversations were oftentimes not recorded but later I would take notes about them to help me not to forget.

In several of occasions, because of personal reasons or overlapping schedules with other events, I was unable to attend some meetings at the Cultural Council that I considered to be important. At these moments, I asked members of the council if they could record themselves on my behalf. They did so, and even included personal messages as part of the tape; "*Hi Arturo*" –giggling– "*this is for ya'* ", was recorded at the beginning followed by a collective "*hi!*". And as a finale "[…] *we have to turn the recorder off, say good bye to Arturo*…" followed by a collective "*Bye, Arturo!"* and laughs that marked the end of that recording session. The inclusion of these messages made me wonder how much I was becoming part of the organization in their eyes and how much they considered me an object of surveillance, or the surveillance itself (Crozier, 2005). This was confirmed after I encountered one of the members of the

council on the street at one of the Art Walk events after I missed one of the meetings and I was unable to ask them to record it for me. In the conversation she teasingly said, "*you missed a good one [meeting]!*" –without any further explanation. Later I would learn that she was not referring, as I originally thought, to key discussions about the local arts and the community. She was referring to an extensive conversation on dating (and the low number of "desirable" men involved in the local arts) that took place at that session. All members of the Cultural Council, for all practical purposes, had been only females since 2006 and before that the few men that were involved were either gay or married. Hence while there were a good number of men artists in town, those who were "datable", according to members of the council, were not very involved in public activities –i.e., reachable or public.

I was an oddity to the scene. Being a Mexican who grew up in Mexico through all my life, I speak English with an accent that gives away my foreigner origin. However, my fair skin and the fact that my presence among them was part of a research project for an advanced degree set me apart. Often times I found myself having to explain who I was and how come I did not fit any stereotype. This was at times a blessing and at times a curse. People will go the extra mile to inform me as they assumed my lack of knowledge or context to understand what they said. Yet, sometimes they were uncomfortable with me either because I am a foreigner or because my work probed their personal lives and their relationships. Another issue to be considered was my sex. While I am male more than 60% of the artists' population are female thus at times conversations would stop, or change the subject, as I approached.

Most of my interviews took place during field observations, when I was attending and documenting meetings and/or events. At some point during the observations, I might ask for complementary details –"*I'm not sure that I truly understand what you meant by that*"; I would say. As they knew that I was a foreigner and that I was there to research "the local relationships with the arts" they often volunteered information followed by thick descriptions to compensate for my perceived lack of knowledge into their doings. "*You know, here [in the US] people see art differently*" –I was told once talking with a local bookbinder. "*In Europe, and in Latin America too, I suppose*" –he added acknowledging my background and trying to draw a common ground while making a point about the differences– "*art is everyday life, here people do not think it, see it, like that. Here, for many, art is something pretty that you buy. They forget that there is art all around. Many people are like that here [in the US]*" –he concluded. This understanding of art in the US was a common trend in many conversations that I had with other local artists when talking about the efforts involved in being an artist in the US. They would try to convey the lack of understanding of the value of art in the US. For them art is creativity, is to look at things from a different –non orthodox– perspective. "*da Vinci was an artist*" –the same bookbinder said at another time– "*that is why he could do what he did*" –he concluded.

In all, this experience of knowledge sharing where people made efforts to bridge my evident lack of framework echoed the research field accounts and reflections of Rusell, a native from Lancashire, England with no experience as a professor or teacher, conducting participatory ethnography about pupil resistance in Australia (Miller & Rusell, 2005). For Russell, this served him to get more complete information of the local

happenings. For me, this gap gave me the opportunity to account for thick descriptions of what it was like to be an artist in the US context.

The Next-door Neighbors and the Commuters

Extant literature on the creative class presents this phenomenon as a natural state of affairs where creativity in a community is self evident. Socioeconomic indicators are used as local indexes of creative success where unclear readings are often paired with clear evidence of failure. As such, none of the current ideas can account for the transitional period before success and change; this is the local "normality." None of the arguments explain where the artists and artisans are before they could be spotted. What do they do before their presence is duly noted in the local scene?

General assumptions presume artists and artisans in a perfect and permanent state of creativity. Current public policy on urbanization does not talk much about developing creative individuals. Instead, its dominant discourse advice is to build the right city to bring in creative –and valuable– individuals (Abbott, 2006). For example, the inclusion of entertainment and parks when re-urbanizing is considered a reliable plan (Florida, 2002a). The spelled out strategy says that urban planners should focus on bringing in young creative people in their late 20s and earlier 30s. These people, the strategy goes, will eventually be the middle aged economically reliable creative individuals that, with the passage of time, will become energetic and independent retirees. This logic raises some critical questions; why can't current residents become their own creative class? Why do creative people need to come from outside? Are the people born here not creative?

The main source of local entertainment in Easthampton consist of the summer green patch concerts and local grassroots theater –all relatively recent accomplishments of the local arts populations. It does not even have an assortment of restaurants, or shops for daily needs beyond groceries, as a local woman boldly protested in a planning session in 2007; "*I don't need to get into my car to drive for 20 to 30 minutes to get a pair of socks or a set of underwear!*" If the town had originally anything to offer, it was rundown cheap rentals and nearby open spaces that, little by little, were lost to urban growth and industrial attempts of development.

Researchers favoring gentrification arguments may have seen this town as the perfect layout for the arrival of artists and artisans as bargain shoppers for living spaces. Their argument could have been strengthened by the nearby presence of towns pricing out their local artists and artisans. Yet, while holding some true, these ideas do not tell it all. A close look at nearby towns within a 30 minute driving radius revealed that the other nearby communities were going through the same rental pricing process as Easthampton. All these places offered low rents, large living quarters and nearby outdoors activities (some of them even better), all equally close to local gentrified areas. Yet, the other spaces were not "chosen."

The high recurrence of this pattern where nearby and similar communities have highly dissimilar socioeconomic outcomes is neither new, nor exclusive to the creative class phenomena. This urban phenomenon is common to post industrial societies where it has been long studied by researchers in the areas of urban planning (e.g., Abbott, 2006; Florida, 2002a, 2005), sociology (e.g., Flanders, 1941; Saunders, 1986), economic geography (Asheim & Hansen, 2009; Lorenzen & Andersen, 2009), and economics (e.g.,

Olsen, 1969). The consensus across these scholars has been that while prices may affect housing choices, prices alone do not consistently explain people's preferences. In other words, price may be a factor, but it is not "the" only factor. Uneven socioeconomic distributions around states, counties, cities and towns testify to this (Birdsall, 2005; Florida, 2005; Leamer, 2006).

Beyond the extended gentrification argument, that is not part of the scope of this work, the community of artists and artisans in Easthampton serves to explore where the local artists and artisans come from, and how they relate to others in the community. The Easthampton's Census data, the list of residents and my ethnographic observations helped me to estimate that while about 230 artists currently live in Easthampton, about 588 were part of the local art scene in 2008. Hence, artists that belong to this community may be split into two broad groups: those who live in town and those who do not. These two broad categories repeatedly find their way into the artists and artisans conversations and attitudes around town. This marks the divide of who volunteers at the Cultural Council and local events and who does not. It speaks of who hangs around town talking to others and making friends outside the studio and who entrenches in the safety of the building.

Direct questions to artists and artisans that live in town about interests and perspectives on the arts, their own business activities, and lifestyle choices in the context of Easthampton brings about a hectic collection of answers. Exemplars of two extremes of these answers may be found among two unique persons in town. One is a young bookbinder, a single woman with a Masters degree in the Liberal Arts. She has been chairing the local council for the Arts, almost since she moved into town, about three years ago. The other person is a middle age married man who defines his artistic

endeavors as “music and moving images” and often works as a video producer, independent movie and documentary maker. He has been in the community since 1998. While apparently opposite in nature, their answers may read different, but their actions converge to a single point; both are local neighbors.

When posed with questions referring to personal choices and living in town, the bookbinder woman talks about business as her main reason to live in town; *“The costs associated with operating in Easthampton are lower for the quality of space than would be available elsewhere in the Valley, and significantly lower compared to many other areas of the country. Business, in this context, also means links to other allied fields, and both Easthampton and the surrounding communities are a particularly rich resource for the bookbinding / letterpress printing / printmaking / small publishing professions.”* The producer and multimedia manager, when addressing the same issues, talked about his ideas on business as he ranked it in third place after lifestyle choices and arts. His justification comes as no surprise; *“[b]ecause Lifestyle and Arts are actually more important. Take care of them, and the business takes care of itself.”*

Sitting at the Master Plan Meetings allowed me to observe him discussing his thoughts with others and pushing for his personal ideals at the planning forums. First, when having to choose where to participate, he selected the Arts, Culture, Historic and Open Space Committee. However, he did not make this selection because of the arts, or the open spaces, or the culture, which would have been the expected choice from someone who constantly argues for lifestyle choices above any other option. He chose this committee because of his thoughts on history; the need to have a sense of belonging, and to preserve the past. He is not a historian, nor does he belong to the local historical

society. In fact, he did not know where it was and had to ask for directions and the working hours when he needed to visit it as part of his work on the committee –he was advised via email, early in March 2007 by the committee's chair, about the historical society schedule so he could visit them. He used this opportunity, after almost 10 years of living in town, to make a connection with the local past and to take ownership of it. He was finally becoming a local neighbor; as his actions of fighting for the local community at the Master Plan Committee were telling. "*We have to preserve the histories before we lose them*" he said in an early meeting when choosing the history subcommittee. As part of his participation, and drawing from his background as a producer, he digitalized a part of the historical collection of pictures for the town. He also introduced in the committee a motion to interview and record all elders in town. Later I would learn that he was from an Indian ancestry and he was drawing from his cultural background in oral history and projecting it to the happenings in town.

Years of ethnographic work at the council gave me an opportunity to observe how the current chairwoman, the bookbinder, and her predecessor, a plastics artist, performed in this role. Referring to this task as a "performance" is not a casual choice of words. It echoes the role playing that I observed on regular basis during this study. For the bookbinder, the position was an effort to bring order and make sense of a rapidly changing town. She comes across as someone whose purpose in life is to organize chaos and enforce rules. Hence, her structured answer about business, lifestyle and arts, comes to no surprise. It is a logical, well articulated and strong statement that echoes economic views and takes no subjective rebuttals.

What comes as a surprise is her passion that shines through when she lets her guard down. She sits on her porch on summer evenings, whenever a concert plays at the local gazebo that sits a couple of yards away from her home, across the road. As the music plays, she enjoys a gin and tonic while day-dreaming to the music or talking to friends that she invites to enjoy these occasions –she has been living here for about three years and she is already a local. This sense of belonging became obvious when she learned that a national pharmacy chain was targeting some local historical buildings, including where she lives, to open a local branch in town. Faster than the time it took her to learn about this threat, she organized a grassroots movement that ended up at the local town council with a proposition that included regulations to protect local businesses and historical buildings. While the results of her actions were still to be announced at the time of this writing, the fact of the matter was that her actions and efforts of protecting the town's legacy reinforced her position as a concerned local neighbor, even when she played the cold business woman "role" to convey her reasoning for her living in town.

Buzzing in and out of the town to work at the studio highlight other types of local artists and artisans. For them, the town is not their living community, but their place of business. The relationship between their local actions and the town mirrors the relationship between work and the commuting worker; a location of convenience and short stays. As an ethnographer I had a hard time observing the relationships of this group to the town. The most relevant aspect of their presence oftentimes was their silences. Not finding them in the midst of local activities, to see their closed doors when walking by, to have to make special appointments to meet them while meeting local

artists around town was followed by just a "knock on the door" request, were some of the markers that set them apart.

Discussions at the local ECA about who would be allowed to participate in the local Bear Fest, as they talked about the possibility to include (or not) non-local artists, were part of this silence, since the non-local artists were not there to speak on their own behalf. Conversations at the local council about the need for grant recipients to know the town and/or have local contacts brought up another moment of silence arising from the fact that non-local artists could not be members of the council itself. Their absence at the Master Plan meetings was another loud silence, as the long term planning of the town was discussed and conversations about the role of the arts did not include them, despite the fact that they are the largest artistic demographic segment in town.

All these moments were exemplified in the comments that were collected from them on the occasions that we encountered each other and through asynchronic conversations, such as emails, as they were not always physically in town or had the time to talk. A loud and clear comment that verbalized the silences came from a female sculpture maker*; "I'm not involved in the life of the community other than my small circle around my studio."* Her comment was not alone. Another woman that does monotyping expressed very similar views when asked about her relationship with the Easthampton community. "*I work as an artist and, when in Easthampton, I primarily create art in my studio."*

Inasmuch as artists that had homes in town were friendly neighbors that had a sense of ownership of the community, commuting artists were distant and pragmatic about the benefits of being in town. They were there to do art, not to hang around. Some

said that they visited friends in town, yet, when pressed about it, they named other artists at the workplace, who were local, and the sporadic acquaintance that was met under extraordinary circumstances. The "creative class talk" about making things happen, does not address this population or question 'how do you do it if you do not live here?'

A window of hope comes from the Art Walk and the semiannual Open Studio sales. These events open a door to the commuting artists and, for a moment, make them into locals. The itinerant artists need reasons to stay in town beyond working. It is up to their local friends and acquaintances to create these reasons. Yet, this is happening. The ECA discussion concluded that non-local artists could participate; regional artists and artisans were welcomed. The ECC conversations repeatedly allowed for non-local artists to get grants if they could tailor them to the community –they want local projects, not commuting work.

More Art, More Artists: Another Visit to One Cottage Street

Following the collaboration trend (or perhaps independently from it, or just in spite of it), tenants at the building were donating artwork for Riverside Industries to auction at gala nights. Members of the disability community were merging paths with the local arts and crafts skills. Evidence of the collusion started to become apparent on the outside, first in the form Riverside Arts Alliance in 2004, and later as a holiday card collection in 2006, and then again, in 2008, when members of Riverside Industries participated in the semiannual Open Studio sales and had exhibits in the monthly Art Walk.

In 2008, during one of the monthly Art Walks, Tony Sadlowski, a member of the Arts Rehabilitation project, presented some of his work; brightly pencil colored utilitarian

vehicles and trucks on paper. He likes to paint what he sees on the highway, said the arts center director. "*And he is good*" –she concluded. His work was presented at one of the local arts galleries –creating another connection in the process. He proudly smiled by his work in a picture taken for the local newspaper (See Picture 19). Walking the maze-like hallways of the building, I encountered him. *"Hi, Tony"*, I said as I recognized him from his picture in the local newspaper. He said hi back. And without any hint of shyness, he asked *"Have you seen my trucks?"* The program is working, he is happy and proud.

Picture 19: Tony Sadlowski at his 2008 show "Modus Operandi" at the Nashawannuck Gallery, Easthampton, MA. He shared this exhibit with Yohah Ralphat, a Local Artists at One Cottage Street

A visit to the Summer 2008 semi-annual Open Studios sale put me in contact with more stories like Tony's. In the middle of the sale of art and crafts of all kinds and all prices sat a table sponsored by the art therapy group. The director of the program was busy talking to people and pointing out several works, all with price tags. People were

buying them because they conveyed beauty and emotions. She took time out of a conversation to say hi to me. She recognized me, as I had talked to her before and I had tried my "artistic skills" at her class as part of my research project.

Picture 20: Work by Eddie Dickson, a Riverside Arts artist

Picture 21: Work by Linda Colby, a Riverside Arts Artist

"I'll be with you in a minute" –she said returning to her conversation. While I waited for her, as I was there to be introduced to a jewelry maker, I stepped back and observed the people coming and going. I focused on the people at the table. I gravitated to people with disabilities, as this Open Studio sale is their show, and for many, their first exhibit. *"I did that one!"* a young woman in her late teens or early twenties exploded in pride, pointing to a small watercolor painting splashed with bright colors that reminded me of summer. The piece was sitting on the right hand of a U-shaped table a couple of feet from where I was standing at the end of a hallway that ended in a T-shape opening. *"Isn't it pretty"* –an older woman that accompanied her stated. *"Look, it says 25 dollars"* the older woman finishes pointing to its price tag. The young woman looks confused. *"25 dollars?"* –she asks. Then she slowly repeated to herself; *"tweeeenty fiiiiiveeee dollars."* The older woman explains; *"Yes, they are selling it for 25 dollars."* The young woman thinks for a moment, but it looked like an eternity, she was confused. The older woman looks at her and finishes *"if it sells, you get 25 dollars."*

The young woman happily claps her hands, takes the painting, and taps on the shoulder of another woman right by her other side that is looking at some other art on this table –this other woman is a stranger to her, but the younger woman is not afraid, nor shy. *"Buy it!"* –she commanded– *"I painted it"* –she concluded. The new woman looks confused, but rapidly recovers. *"These are very nice colors"* –she says and takes back her attention to what she was looking at before the interruption.

The older woman, accompanying the now visibly excited young woman, holds her by the arm and immediately calms her down. The director of the program joins in on the conversation. *"Yes, you did that one in class with me"* –she says in the calm and

soothing voice that characterizes her. The young lady has regained enough control to explain her excitement. *"25 dollars!"* she opens. Then she concludes; *"I had never had sooooo much money before!"* The director looks at her in the eye and says; *"But first we have to sell it."* The young woman looked back at her and thinks for a moment. Then, without a word, she started to move away, keeping her painting with her. Only a bright smile of pride suggested what was in her mind; something that I did is worth something to others.

The older woman who was saying good bye to the director of the program realized that her younger companion was leaving her. She rushed to catch up with her. She took the painting from her hands and returned it to the table that was still a couple of steps away from them. *"Let's see if someone buys it"* –she said, putting it back in its original spot.

Nothing else matters in the world for the younger woman now, she walks slowly and proudly looking back over her shoulder every few seconds, perhaps to be sure that her work is still there or to catch the moment someone buys it. The director of the center looks at me and points out another person at the opposite end of the table. She wants me to get introduced to the local videographer that made the promotional clip for the center before we go out to meet a jeweler. She is as proud about her work at the center as the young woman who just got a sense of worth about herself and that is now lost in a sea of people walking in every direction right behind me.

What Have I Learned so Far?

These brief descriptions offer a glimpse into a series of unexpected moments where people shape situations and situations shape people. This sequence shows how

conditions that are now part of the town's everyday life, were not so before. The descriptions show variety of approaches followed to relate local business with the arts community when I discussed the Windows Project and the Art Walk. Here I explored the differences between a "one person's show" versus the power of a community. Later I presented and contrasted artists that live in town against artists that only have a local studio. At that time I made a point on differences on their ways to engage their local community.

Another issue that I presented was how a disability project became the seeding moment for the local arts community, while the local arts community became the supporter for this project. These moments demonstrate how the concept of a plausible member of the creative class has no clean cut image or identity. It reveals moments where benefits may not be economic, but social, as they elevate the quality of life of the artists, and of the town's population.

Tony and the young lady could be considered members of a local creative class, yet, they may not truly be accepted as such. They are artists in their own right, their work sells and people from other places come to see it and purchase it.

The director of the center is another example of the disruption of normality. She was a very successful local artist who did stoneware and painted ceramics. She had original designs that sold all over the US. Her work was included in the catalogs of galleries across the country. She was the poster child for the creative class. Yet, one day she moved on –as she said. She sold her business, liquidated most of her inventories and set herself out to be the director of the center for art therapy. Did she feel that she was

still in the creative class category? She was working as a therapist and day-to-day manager for an operations unit of a local non-profit. Is she no longer creative?

Easthampton's One Cottage Street "creative class" unfolded from casual friendships and collaborations. It was not a planned endeavor. Copying the "culture" of this building has been tried as a business model by the other buildings in town, but not to a complete success. Differences are such that collaborations across buildings never go far. A few of the individuals from the different buildings can work together for long periods of time, or large number of artists across buildings for short periods of time but never large numbers for large periods. Local artists are painfully aware of this, as several collaborative projects have failed to launch, or if they were launched, they did not last long, as I will further discuss in Chapter 5.

Some newly arrived artists in town spoke of a vibrant arts community to support their choice of moving into town. Would they have moved in when Riverside Industries first moved in? While this may never be known, the thought of it is worth a reflection. Talks with some of the earlier tenants of the building, who are seen as the elders of the arts community, express nostalgia for other times, when there were no rules and only friends and long nights of conversations. Had they not been here already, and had they not been their young selves, would they have chosen today's Easthampton as their creative space? This is a question that may never be answered, yet is worth consideration. The old guard of artists and artisans has made Easthampton what it is today, yet they may have never chosen to make it into what it is. Likewise, the new arrivals that carry the energy and branding of a plausible creative class may have never had the plan, the will, or the ideas to make Easthampton into what it is today.

In summary, is there a creative class in Easthampton? Are artists and artisans organiz(ed/ing) as a local "class"? Do artists and artisans in town have a positive impact beyond their close(d) circles? These are questions that emerge from the ethnographic work and require a complementary approach to be answered. . The idea of a creative "class" requires the presence of a local socioeconomic structure of individuals sharing certain attributes and lifestyles (Bourdieu, 1987). While the issue of lifestyle was introduced and discussed through the ethnographic work, the presence of a social structure, and its local impact and reach, still needs to be addressed. Hence, as a next step, using a social network methodology, I mapped the local social structure to explore the organizing processes taking place (or not) among artists and artisan and between them and other members of the community. That's the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

CREATIVE CLASS ORGANIZING?

The ethnographic work suggested that the local organizing of artists and artisans seemed to develop a network of relationships based on common interests and shared goals. Yet only documenting the processes and exploring their reach I could corroborate and evaluate the consequences of the intertwining of artists and artisans in the local everyday life. This knowledge was core to answer the research question of this project; ***How do local organizing processes structure geographically bound and delimited creative class clusters?*** For this I needed to understand the pattern of relationships on the one-to-one dynamics among artists, the resulting (or not) network, and the local impact (or lack) of that network (See Figure 2). In other words, I needed to explore the local social networks at the micro, meso, and macro level.

Social networks, from a theoretical perspective, are the representation of recurring patterns of interactions among social actors embedded in a common context (Wasserman & Faust, 1994). The power of social network theory derives from its assumptions of interdependence among individuals. This is, the importance of individuals stems from their relationships and ties with other actors within the network and not solely from their attributes as individuals *per se.* As such, social network analysis includes theories, models, and applications presented in terms of relational concepts or processes (Wasserman & Faust, 1994). This form of research is based on two core assumptions; (1) the importance of relationships among interacting units, attributes and nature of the links,

and (2) the relevance of these relations within the network in terms of the context of links and nature of the network itself (Borgatti & Cross, 2003; Borgatti, 2005).

Taking advantage of the above described elements, the social network methodology served me to evaluate the uniqueness of the artists and artisans organizing and its effects on the community –including the plausible emergence of a local creative class and the consequences of this emergence. Current arguments on the creative class address it as a differential on the geographical distribution of certain kind of special individuals with a particular set of social characteristics and personal attributes (e.g., Florida, 2002a). While such studies have successfully correlated the local presence or absence of the creative class to variations in quality of life and socioeconomic development across communities (e.g., Evans, 2007; Florida, 2002a; Markusen, 2005), they do not explain the social order within the creative class and between the members of creative class and their host community, i.e., who associates with whom, when, where, and for what reason, or whether this is the "effect" of the group in the first place. In contrast, through this work, I argue that local relevance of individuals, artists and artisans, as potential members of the creative class, is best understood by examining the social networks born from their action and reaction (Papachristos, 2009). This approach, in the context of this project, meant to explore the relevance of artists and artisans because of their relationships among them and with the community rather than to presume them to be relevant just because they are local artists and artisans, as the extant literature on creative class proposes.

A creative class effect may occur through an epidemic-like process of social contagion through geographically proximate creative individuals –as I presented in the

previous chapter. Descriptions of the creative class suggest that above-average geographical concentrations of members of the creative class are needed to have a positive creative class effect (e.g., Florida, 2002a). Yet, these works do not address why high concentrations of creative individuals –rather than just a selected few– are a requirement for a socioeconomic change. When discussing the creative class' site selections, casuistic rationalizations of lifestyle choices are mentioned as justification for prescriptive policy.

By contrast, social proximity and relationships suggest that physical *propinquity* to someone enhances the chances of starting a lasting relationship (Back, Schmukle, & Egloff, 2008). Thus, a large geographical concentration of creative individuals, it can be argued, helps to foster their networking into a creative class as there is an increased chance that, when engaging in local relationships, they will associate with nearby peers, e.g., geographically proximate *affine* people. Hence, having artists and artisans working in close proximity, as it is the case of the old factory buildings, could be accounted as an element to this phenomenon at Easthampton.

Yet geographical *propinquity* is not enough; *affinity* needs to be present as well. As such, it can be argued that artists and artisans in Easthampton, as members of a plausible creative class, derive their relationships not only because they are in close geographical proximity to each other but because in addition to that they share personal similarities [e.g., *affinity* (Ruyu & Kuperman, 2007; Sorenson, 2003)]. These two elements together; *propinquity* and *affinity*, foster the spread of local *homophily* [i.e., the tendency of individuals to associate with similar others (Adamic, Buyukkokten, & Adar, 2003; Handcock *et al.*, 2007; Levin & Cross, 2004; Levin, 2007)] which fosters

organizing patterns within the local network (Ruyu & Kuperman, 2007). Thus, cliques, hierarchies and links across cliques become recognizable local patterns as *homophily* and *affinity* drive the network(ing) of individuals (Ruyu & Kuperman, 2007).

The patterns around town, born from the long term maintenance of relationships driven by *homophily* and *affinity*, as described above, are not random as they may be contingent on *trust*-based exchanges (Granovetter, 1985, 1992; Levin & Cross, 2004; Levin, 2007; Smith, 2007) similar to a reiterative prisoners' dilemma game (Bowles & Gintis, 2000). Thus, the *ongoing enactment* of relationships around town supporting the emergence of a creative class, can be argued, only occur if there is an underlying degree of *trust* among participants in the exchange [e.g., belief in honesty and reliability of the other party (Gaggio, 2006; Paniccia, 1998; Wasserman & Faust, 1994)]. Eventually, these relationships, based on ongoing trust may foster an institutionalized network of group collaboration that at some point in time could be known as a local creative class. In all, large patterns of organizing among individuals within town could be said are the repetition –and overlapping– of multiple dyadic relationships born from *propinquity*, *affinity*, *homophily* and *trust* (See

Table 3).

Table 3: Constructs and Theoretical Base for the Social Network Organizing and Linking Drivers

	Network / Link Characteristics	Exemplar of Ethnographic Emphasis
Trust	Emotional Support	Displays of emotional support
	Material Support	Lending equipment or materials
	Information / Advice	Requesting or providing advice
	Aid	To be available for help / helping
Affinity	Emotional	Sharing concerns about the same issues
	Social	Attendance at the same meetings
Homophily	Status	Education, age, gender, race, relationship status, income, occupation, artist / artisan status
	Value	Religion, political party, friendship, artist / artisan status
Propinquity	Perceived	Sense of immediate proximity

Yet, the presence of a local creative class may not be enough to support the arguments in the extant literature as the whole point of its local value is not just to account for its presence but to exploit its dynamics as a localized resource of positive change –its organizing processes need to be linked to local positive impact, I argue. At the end the group-like nature of creative individual activities and lifestyle choices may generate patterns of interaction, daily behaviors, and belief systems that may be particularly well suited for the social contagion of creativity and innovation –the seeds for the sought after local effect. For this to happen, structurally, the group demands certain micro-behavior of its members (e.g., propinquity, trust, homophily and affinity) that may de facto increase a member's exposure to potentially creative situations where their actions may affect the community at large. Whether the local creative class structure is a large cohesive component or a series of interlinked small cohesive pockets

around the community, a large degree of cohesiveness may be required for the creative class to be effective.

Florida's (2002a) argument, a salient exemplar of this conversation on the extant literature, introduces a different understanding of the creative class and its processes. His argument, contrasting the one presented in this work, describes the creative class not as a group of networked individuals weaved in community a bound to a locality but as a collection of highly mobile individualistic agents pursuing personal gains engage in temporal relationships. Links to a locality are individually associated with private gains and are as lasting as the personal benefits are present –hence their presumed high mobility. Likewise his work assumes that positive changes link to a local presence of a creative class are not collective or coordinated efforts but quantitative aggregates of individual endeavors. Furthermore, he presents places not as communities or networks where economic endeavors are just one of the many embedded outcomes but as a "ecosystems that harness human creativity and turn it into economic value" (Florida, 2002a:xix). Hence local benefits from the creative class can only be measured and valued because of its economic value and/or outcome and nothing else. Any non economic value may only be useful if it can be proven that serves to attract and preserve local economic value –forcing an economic driven *ex-facto* perspective to its analysis and limiting the implementation of creative or unusual change in the community.

To explore those issues my social networks research agenda, hence started by probing, at a micro level, the one-to-one relationships among artist and artisans and between them and other members of the community. From the micro level analysis, I moved to a meso-level analysis where I examined the artists and artisans network within

the Easthampton's community. Finally, at the macro level, I explored the local community's socioeconomic structure and the role of artists and artisans in it.

I began the micro-level analysis looking into the relationships held by artists and artisans while I attempted to understand two elements. First I explored the factors that may foster and sustain these relationships. Second I looked at whether these factors might explain the strength and nature of the relationships.

At the meso-level, I started with a two-mode network of individuals and organizations. I considered these memberships as the organizing patterns among individuals. Framed by this perspective I transformed the two-mode network into a one-mode network of individuals. I started from the assumption that those individuals I documented as belonging to the same organization and who met on regular basis maintained a relationship between them. I used this information to map the local organizing through the position of everyone within town. Using this one-mode network of individuals I attempted to account for other structural roles of artists and artisans in the community. In particular, I paid attention to the significance of the presence of artists and artisans within the community.

The macro-level analysis started with the same two-mode network (individuals and organizations) as the meso-level analysis yet rather than looking at the individual relationships it focused on the organizational linkages. In this case I argued that if individuals belong to more than one organization, the multiple organizations where they hold membership may share information and may have goals that overlapped to some degree. This allowed for a broad picture of the local socioeconomic structures of the community while focusing on organizing as the tool used by members of a potential

creative class to achieve positive change. As such, the macro focus allowed me to explore the governance of the community and the positions of artists and artisans activities within the local structure. More important yet, I aimed to explore if the artists and artisans' creativity, as a local domain of interests, percolates into town's everyday life.

An Unfolding Creative Class?

How do relationships among members of an emerging creative class look like? What kind of socioeconomic structure do the relationships foster? How do members of the creative class make things happen in this context? How do their relationships affect the community at large? As part of this social network analysis, I focused on exploring these ideas in an effort to better understand how plausible members of the creative class, when moving to a place, "make things happen — both for themselves and the community" (Florida, 2007).

In the following sections I describe and define / inform the data collection followed by a general depiction of the community. After this, the analysis of each one of the three levels of concern; macro, meso, and micro follows. Finally, a brief discussion and conclusion will be presented.

The boundaries of my observations for this part of the project, following a phenomenological perspective from the ethnographic work, were defined by local happenings involving artists and artisans as they saw themselves in the context of the community and vice versa (Laumann, Marsden, & Prensky, 1989; Taylor & Bogdan, 1984). Under these circumstances, the members of the local community are defined as those individuals who live and/or work within the geographical boundaries of their

community –in this case the town of Easthampton. I defined potential members of the local creative class as any self-defined artist or artisan who lives and/or works in this community as well as any citizen engaged in arts and/or crafts related activities. This operationalization of the creative class, while apparently narrower than Florida's (2002a) original work, casts a broader net as it is not limited to a priori categorizations but extended to look at processes between the culture and the economy. This understanding echoes Gibson and Kong (2005) critical view of the creative class and their analysis showing this group at the core of all conceptualizations of the cultural economy. Additionally, as the ultimate goal of this project is to understand the possible emergence of a creative class which may foster socioeconomic change, this choice is appropriate. Artists and artisans have been identified as disruptors of reality (Sommer, 2005; Thompson & Sholette, 2004) which echoes the collision of economic and culture as discussed by Gibson and Kong (2005). Through their work, artists explore, critique, record and disrupt the social ethos by breaking the "habitualization" and bringing new eyes to old views (Shklovsky, 1965), but would this translate into a "class" fostering socioeconomic change?

Framed by these definitions, the population of interest for this part of the project were:

1. members of the local artists and artisans community, and/or
2. members of the local government, and/or
3. local business owners, and/or
4. members of top management teams of local business, and/or

5. members of the board of directors of local organizations including businesses and non-profits, and/or
6. active participants in local civic organizations and activities, and/or
7. local activists, and/or
8. any individual who shared a residency with anyone fitting any of the above (1 through 7) categories –this last category was included to ensure a better understanding of the local dynamics by accounting for *connectedness*, *closeness*, *eigenvectors* and *betweenness* in as close to real life conditions as possible (e.g., people talking about their daily activities at home).

Data were collected from several sources during a period of over four years. Data collection on individuals and organizations were "seeded" using early ethnographic observations (See Table 1). Additional sources included town records, local companies' web pages, chamber of commerce directories, local newspapers and newsletters, non-profit organizations, public records and board members annual reports (See Appendix C for a full list of data Sources). Public records included the local chamber of commerce, organizations' web pages, marketing material, phone books, town records, newspapers, newsletters, and board annual reports.

Out of the 15,360 subjects documented as members of the Easthampton community [13,596 from the Census plus (City of Easthampton, 2008) 1,764 from archival sources and ethnographic observations] only 3,809 individuals fulfilled the research requirements to be included in this project (Table 4). Efforts were made to have a fair representation of the local population. However, because of the research focus of

this project some discrepancies between the composition of the town and that of the data took place. For example, the proportion of people with non-reported occupations was only 3% instead of 13% as reported on the town records. Members of the retired community were documented in public records as 14% of the 17-yrs old or older local population while in this project they only comprised 5% of the participants. Relevant variations on the opposite direction were found in the art and service categories. The data collection method enhanced the art and service representation in the participants compared to the town records from 4% to 11% and from 32% to 44%, respectively. It is worth noticing that while the variations in some cases may be considered substantial, variations in the sampling were not relevant to this study because the interest of the project was how individuals identify themselves as artists and artisans and relate to other members of the community,. For instance, percent variations on artists and artisans' data were mostly due to especial efforts made to reach as many members of this group as possible, thus resulting in a larger representation. Yet the interest on the processes where culture and economy collide benefited from this over sampling as it served to better understand those moments of encounter. Likewise, the interest in the cultural economy in the context of everyday life filtered-out individuals that were both non-related to the arts, and economically and socially inactive members of the population. This filter resulted in some of the variations described above such as the reduction on the sampling of retired people and unemployed individuals.

Additional basic demographics (e.g., age, gender, political affiliation, artist or not, businessperson or not), household membership (e.g., who live in the same house),

organizational affiliations (e.g., name of the organization(s), and position within the organization) were also documented.

Table 4: Community and Project's Data

	Community of Easthampton						Project's Surveyed Population					
	Residents		No-residents		Grand Total	% of Total	Resident		No-resident		Grand Total	% of Total
	Female	Male	Female	Male			Female	Male	Female	Male		
Arts & Crafts												
Artists & Artisans	94	136	203	155	588	4%	33	45	202	155	435	11%
Active Labor												
Government	58	144	13	34	249	2%	35	89	13	34	171	4%
Civic Organizations	78	49	42	34	203	1%	7	8	42	34	91	2%
Education	662	241	17	15	935	6%	186	92	17	15	310	8%
Health	698	151	28	16	893	6%	87	20	28	16	151	4%
Disability Svc	82	26	48	29	185	1%	29	9	48	29	115	3%
Manufacture	140	715	8	60	923	6%	13	78	8	58	157	4%
Retail	141	154	20	37	352	2%	32	42	20	37	131	3%
Services	1,857	2,050	521	483	4,911	32%	314	345	521	482	1,662	44%
Army	3	47	0	0	50	0%	0	5	0	0	5	0%
Non Active Labor												
Student	638	542	0	0	1,180	8%	118	92	0	0	210	6%
Homemaker	462	12	0	0	474	3%	55	2	0	0	57	1%
Retired	1,053	896	0	0	1,949	13%	75	104	0	0	179	5%
Disable	119	121	0	0	240	2%	8	10	0	0	18	0%
Unemployed	82	73	0	0	155	1%	5	3	0	0	8	0%
Not Reported												
Not Reported	1,066	1,006	0	1	2,073	13%	63	45	0	1	109	3%
Grand Total	**7,233**	**6,363**	**900**	**864**	**15,360**	**100%**	**1,060**	**989**	**899**	**861**	**3,809**	**100%**

Source Town of Easthampton List of residents (2008) 17 years old or olders and etnograhic work
Categories within "Active Labor" encompass the different domains of livelihood of the members of the community "Non-Active Labor" are the self-reported status.

Micro-level: Creative Friends, Colleagues, and Acquaintances

It is argued that members of a creative class share a contiguously geographical space while acting as a collective (Florida, 2002a, 2002b). Yet there is no explanation about how their organizing happens in the first place. In this section, I advance that rather than having an overall collective coordination, members of an emergent creative class share interests and perspectives at the dyadic level –i.e., **micro level**. These actions, I propose, are replicated throughout the community by affinity mechanisms establishing a network of common interests and actions.

At the **micro level** data from participatory ethnographic, archival data and questionnaires distributed during 2008 were used to explore dyadic relationships within ego networks. Participatory ethnography for the period of February 2005 to May 2008 and archival data for the period of 1976 to 2008 were used to inform the design of the questionnaire and to help with its distribution and collection (See Appendix D for a time table). Once questionnaires were returned, the same original ethnographic data plus extended observations covering the period ending on May 2009 as well as public records, organizations' reports and archival data for the same timeframe were used to contextualize, complement, correct and triangulate responses from participants. These data were used to look at the ego networks of local artists and artisans, to assess the strengths of their bonding and to identify the actors defining the relationships at the dyadic level. In other words, this level of analysis addressed the interpersonal relationships of local artists and artisans.

The ethnographic work of the previous chapter suggested the presence of multiple and overlapping relationships among artists and artisans as well as between them and

other non-members of this group. Yet the nature of those relationships and how prevalent and/or common they are still needs to be explored. To this end, as the next step, I mapped the relationships and assess their nature. These analyses served to explore the nature of the locally emergent creative class. As such this micro-analysis focused on evaluating the role of trust, affinity, homophily and propinquity in the context of the relationships among artists and artisans and artists / artisans with other members of the community.

In recent years, research had determined the relationship between the so called creative class and instances of urban renaissance (DeNatale & Wassall, 2007; Donegan *et al.*, 2008; Evans, 2007; Florida, 2002a; Gibson & Graham, 1992; Markusen, 2005). These works have presumed the creative class to be a collective (a dense network of individuals) having common attributes (homophily) working together (trust) in close proximity (propinquity) while sharing common interests (affinity). However, these assumptions have not been put to a test.

As the conversations on creative class advance and become part of the local policy discourse (e.g., Donegan *et al.*, 2008; Evans, 2007; Florida *et al.*, 2008) it is necessary to explore its nature and the elements that may foster (or not) its presence and its desirable outcomes. As suggested in the previous chapter, artists and artisans are more likely to relate to other artists. This broad picture does not speak of the particulars of dyadic relationships. "Why do artists and artisans relate (or not) to each other?" and, "if they do not relate to other artists and artisans, to whom do they relate and why?" are questions yet to be explored.

To address the above questions the ego networks of each respondent and the full network resulting from combining all the ego networks were explored. Following this a factor analysis was performed to evaluate the relevance of the homophily, affinity and trust in the relationships sustained by the local artists and artisans.

Who Hangs Around… with Whom?

To further delved into what I had learned through the participatory ethnography I distributed a questionnaire focused on why do artists and artisans engage in relationships with each other and with other people around town. Informed by the ethnographic work for the period of February 2005 to May 2008, I located and contacted via email 287 artists and artisans working and/or living in town. Email invitations were either (or both) preceded or followed by personal visits and conversations. Additionally, open invitations to participate in this project were posted at different locations around town and inserted in local newsletters. The posting locations were previously identified as places regularly visited by local artisans and artists and included local dinners and ice-cream parlors (3 locations), local studio buildings (3 locations), bus stops around town (4 locations), local art supplies shops (3 locations), local musical instruments retail and repair shops (2 locations) and local music stores (2 locations), local art galleries, and art retailers (6 locations). The choice of newsletters was based on their target populations to ensure that they reached members of the local art community. The selected newsletters included the Valley Arts newsletter, the local chamber of commerce mailer, and the Easthampton Council on Aging and Senior Center newsletter. The information about the questionnaire was published on monthly basis for a period of 6 months (total 6 times) in the local arts newsletter and only once in the remaining two (total 1 time each). Additionally, under a

"chain-referral sampling" –or follow the lead approach (Watters & Biernacki, 1989)– respondents were asked to refer the questionnaire to others. The social network data collection for this part of the project was done through *free recall* (to freely name other members of the network without limiting choices to a pre-defined set of names) and *free choice* methods (not to cap the number of people that an individual can name) (Wasserman & Faust, 1994).

Picture 22: Bulletin Board at One Cottage Street. One of the advertising places for the Questionnaire.

Participants on this part of the project were offered the option to answer the questionnaire either on paper or on line (available at www.mycreativecommunity.org). A copy of the questionnaire is provided in Appendix H. All respondents choose to answer the electronic version of the instrument. The response rate for the electronic version was 21% (60 responses over 247 direct invitations) providing 60 ego networks totaling 274 different dyads (Table 5).

Table 5: Characteristics of the Questionnaire Respondents

	Female	Male	Total
Artist / Artisans			
Easthampton Residents	20	10	30
Non Residents	9	2	11
Total	**29**	**12**	41
No Artist / Artisan			
Easthampton Residents	10	6	16
Non Residents	1	2	3
Total	**11**	**8**	19
Grand Total	40	20	60

A series of conversations with respondents and non-respondents suggested that electronic questionnaires were preferred as they did not feel "heavy" or "too long". These statements resonate with my own personal sense of the instrument; the paper version of the survey was, by necessity, over 50 pages long since it needed to include everything even if it was not to be used. The online version was designed to be self-adjusted to each participant's situation, thus unnecessary materials were automatically removed. Another element that contributed to the preference of the online over the paper version came across after the date it was collected. The respondents have a high level of education attainment and they were computer savvy thus they were not uncomfortable with the digital instrument. A closer look at the respondents' demographics showed this group as having in its large majority at least a bachelor's degree and to be comfortable with the use of computers (Figure 4). This echoed Florida's (2002a) observations on the level of education of this group.

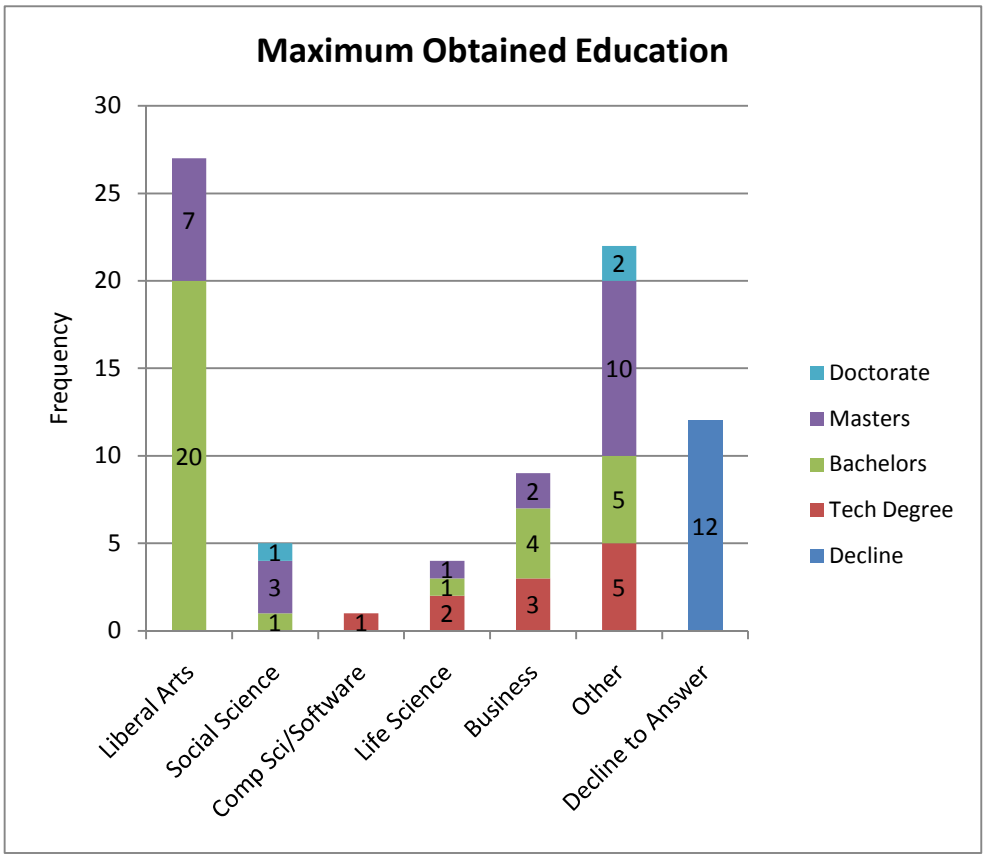


Figure 4: Summary of the Survey Respondents' Educational Attainment
Numbers add up to more than 60 (total number of respondents) as several individuals hold degrees in more than one area

The questionnaire in itself did not only use a free recall method to identify relationships but it included inquiries that served to evaluate the attributes of the reported relationships. To explore ego networks the respondents were presented with name generators that framed each question in the context of one of the three different domains identified as relevant during the ethnographic work; Business, Art and Lifestyle. The name generators requested the respondent to name all the individuals that matched certain premises (e.g., "Looking back in the *last 12 months*, to whom did *you talk* regularly and consistently in relationship to your own *business* activities?"). For this project it was not only relevant to know about the names but to understand the nature of the relationships.

Thus, after each name the participants were prompted to evaluate each relationship in terms of its strength and to describe it according to constructs of trust, affinity, homophily, heterophily and propinquity. See Appendix G for the theoretical match of the questionnaire to the constructs of interest.

After all questionnaires were collected, the ethnographic work and archival data served to ensure that reported relationships were properly interpreted and mapped in the local social network. For instance, participants more often than not reported the names of the members of their ego networks by partial names, nicknames, phonetic spellings, or by references to events and/or places. In this context, the move from ego networks into a full network relied on my ethnographic work and knowledge of the community so I could go back and properly match names with people and people with relationships. As part of the initial analysis of the questionnaire's data all ego networks, totaling 274 dyads, were plotted (Figure 5).

Of the participants, 65% were female which is higher than the 54% documented female population engaged in the local arts and crafts. This large participation of women resonated with the ethnographic work. Conversations among artists and artisans around town always echoed the feeling of the lack of men as active participants. Members of the Cultural Council, the Art Walk and the City Arts volunteers and organizers were mostly women. More than once I found myself to be the only men in the room. Yet men were not fully absent from the scene. The main issue was that men artists and artisans were not that active in the public sphere around town. "*It is hard to find men around here*" and "*Arturo, we need a man's point of view, what do you think about […]*" was more than once stated at the Cultural Council meetings through the years. A closer look at the

network from this part of the project shows not only the large number of women involved, in relationship to men, but the central role that they play in this network; men are mostly advisors while women are advisors and connectors–if I were to remove the women then the network would become disconnected, if I were to remove the men the network would still be present. Local arts and crafts are a sisterhood (Figure 5).

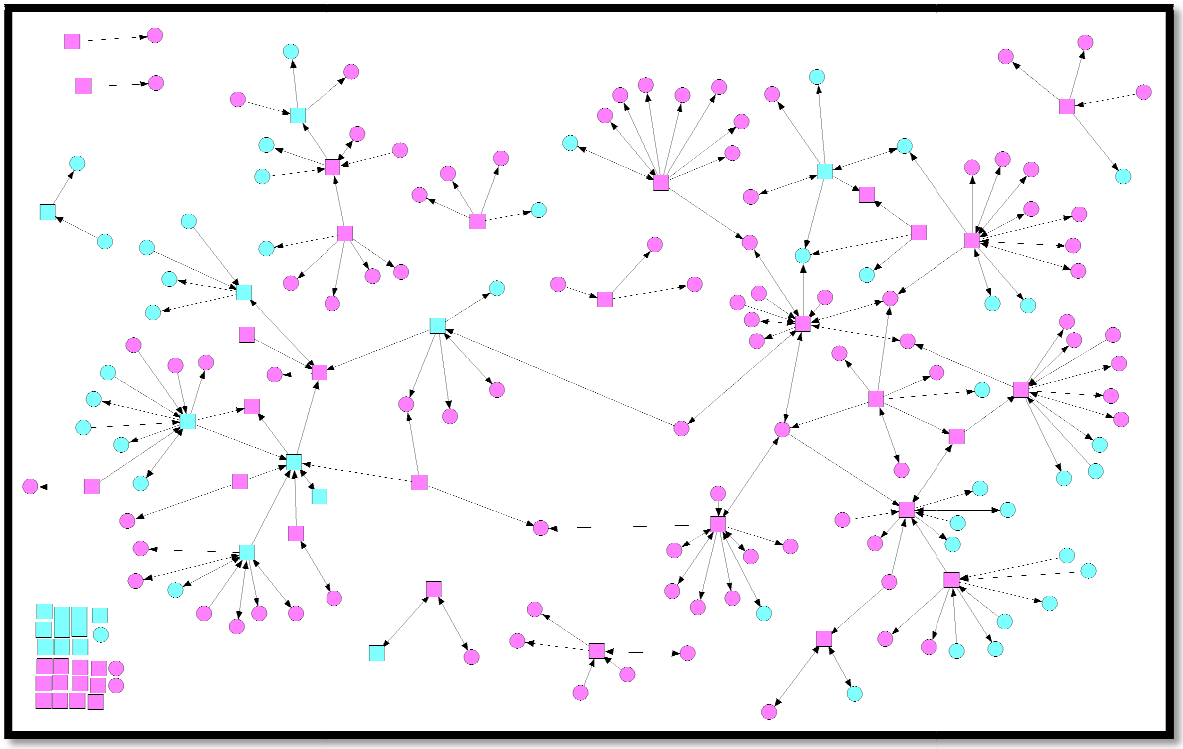


Figure 5: Ego Maps of Questionnaire Respondents.
[●] Blue shapes are males & [●] Pink shapes are females.
[□] Square shapes are respondents & [○] Circle shapes are reported names.

Age wise the participants reflected the ethnographic observations as most of them were at least 30 years old. Of the respondents, 29.0% reported to be between 30 to 40 years old, 21.0% between 40 to 50 years old, 27.4% between 50 to 60 years old and 16% between 60 to 70 years old. This information was as well latent in the ethnographic work. A main reason for this came across during conversations around town. Most of

the artists that are influential and had developed a larger number of relationships had done so through years of efforts and work –which reflects on their age –e.g., to have many years of local involvement you need to have lived there for many years. As a local bookbinder put it "*we were young when we first came, nobody thought much about anything other than doing your thing and hanging out. It was so many years ago… 20? I guess 20 at least*." Another element that played into place about the age factor was education and availability of income and time. To have a high educational attainment you need to have devoted many years to your education; most of the respondents had at least a bachelor if not a masters and a Ph.D. Additionally the artists and artisans that undertook these activities as hobbies often times had disposable income and time to pursue these activities; they were retired.

Local interests and local involvement are often reflection of local residency, "*I care for the place where I live*" (or similar) was a common response among local residents when asked about the reason for their involvement in the town's activities and planning sessions. As such, the large number of questionnaire respondents living in town (77%) was no surprising. What was interesting, however, was the variation between the number of respondents that lived in town (77%) and the number of respondents that either had a studio in town (45%) or worked in town (63%). Not all local respondents were "fully" local artists or artisans –to limit the research to only people that lived in town and had local studios would not have shown a complete view of the local organizing. Taking a closer look into the data showed that oftentimes "hobby artists" where mostly local artists, while "professional artists" were outsiders. Having large studios available along with zoning regulations that allowed for the use of industrial

processes such as glassmaking, pottery and cabinetmaking incentivized the arrival of outside artists. Besides, who wants to buy a new house when you only need a new office? Thus most of the artists, especially the relatively new, commute to their studio. Artists with longer tenures in town had eventually found and could afford living quarters in the community.

Arguments about a causal linkage between positive local change and the presence of a creative class are enlightened by the fact that 80% of the respondents described themselves as politically active. This has further relevance as 84.5% of the respondents claimed to be politically active at the state level while 90% reported to be regular voters at national level. Local artists and artisans are not only politically active but they are locally involved –as I noted in more than one occasion at the Art Walk, the Windows Project, The Bear Fest, the City Arts and the Master Plan to name a few. The nature of their involvement appears not to be supported by religious ideology as 74% described themselves as non-religious. Artists and artisans acted in benefit of their community because they believe it to be their civic duty and not because they saw it as their religious obligation. Yet many had religious upbringings and thought themselves as spiritual people as I learned through conversations. *"There is something that is bigger than you or me as a person, I cannot ignore it and just keep it going, you know. There is something that makes you want to do 'good.' You need to hear it, otherwise you go like crazy. You don't find yourself"* –this I was told by a local bookbinder during a conversation on discussing his philosophy of life. *"We are all interconnected, we cannot ignore others and act as if we were alone"* – I heard from another artist when discussing why to act as a community and why he sought to preserve local open spaces. His pursuit to preserve

nature is his lifestyle choice that well reflects in his art. In all, this community driven attitude contrast conventional views of the creative class as a group of people pursuing individual gains.

While members of the creative class are trumpeted as fighting for local well being it is worth noticing that, as I mentioned before, not everyone lives in town. Furthermore they are not, at least in the case of this community, truly local as 65% of the respondents said that they moved into town in the last 10 years –more than half of them said they did it in the last 3 years. They are fighters for their local community, yet they are mobile and have changed their locality many times over time. They bring their experiences and build from what they have seen elsewhere. More important yet, they bring links that bridge the community to other places and external ideas. They carry new eyes to old views; they bring creativity.

Another relevant issue was the homogeneity in the respondents. Lack of ethnic diversity around town was always present when I was in the field (more often than not, being Mexican, I was the diversity "token" at meetings) and this was reiterated by the data from the questionnaires and the local census. Local population around Easthampton is very homogeneous in terms of ethnicity being mostly white (non-Hispanic). This was reflected in the respondents which were 92% white (non-Hispanic). While this can be problematic as it may hinder the presence of multiple perspectives, this uniformity accounted for some of the homophily and affinity that were found in the data and observed around town. People were more likely to see themselves on others –at least on first impressions. Yet, similarities were, more often than not, only skin deep around artists and artisans especially when compared with the town at large. Conversations

showed that local artists and artisans had backgrounds very different from the rest of the people in town. Besides their unique works and expressions through different arts, their life experiences were all over the place. From same sex couples to traditional marriages; from travelers of the world to lifelong residents of the Valley; from professional artists to self-discovered artists, there were all kinds of perspectives present and accepted. Nonetheless, to the casual observer, artists and artisans were all middle class, white, mostly U.S. citizens –just like the rest of the people in town.

Overall, these demographics describe the local artists and artisans as a group of politically active, non religious, middle age white people, mostly female, who moved into town relatively recently. Yet a second and closer look would show them to be very diverse in terms of life experiences and lifestyle choices. Artists and artisans did not fit the profile of the average citizen in town exactly –and they were proud of it!

What do People Care About Around Here When Choosing Relationships?

People relate to each other with a purpose. As such relationships to be sustained over time are framed by understandings of those interests. Informed by the participant ethnography I identified three domains framing relationships around town. These domains are business (e.g., how to earn money, where to sell, how to price the artwork), art (e.g., what is like to be an artist, the process of creating art, the role of creativity), and lifestyle (e.g., to be an artist is a way of life, not a profession, living in an "artistic" place, working in a creative environment, supporting local change). While I noted that these domains informed the nature of relationships around town, the domains alone did not determine the choice of relationships among individuals. The dyadic relationship, the micro element of the local network, I learned, is contingent upon trust, affinity,

homophily, heterophily and propinquity. These constructs, for the purpose of this work, were defined as follows.

Trust. It was understood as the "willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other party will perform a particular action important to the trust or, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party" (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995:712). In general, a good indicator of trust is friendship as it is based on generalized trust (Gibbons, 2004) Following on earlier studies on *trust* I adopted elements from the Norbeck Social Support Questionnaire. Respondents rated a series of statements describing instances where trust on the other person was an underlying concern. Each statement –concerning issues of Emotional Support, Material Support, Information / Advice, and Aid– was measured on a five point scale.

*Affinity***.** It implies an active role by the actors; to recognized personal similarities with others (e.g., similar background, education, belonging to the same group), not so much relying on a stereotype but rather feeling a common connection either emotional and/or social (Levin, 2007; Ruyu & Kuperman, 2007). Affinity is composed by the sum of the personal interest or unilateral affinity of each of the individuals in a given eventual relationship (Levin, 2007; Ruyu & Kuperman, 2007). In this context, and for the purposes of this project, affinity was operationalized as a series of five point scale rated questions concerning perceived personal similarities with others.

Homophily. It is defined as the observed similarities between crucial characteristics of a relationship (Marx & Spray, 1972). Homophily can be broadly categorized in two; status homophily and value homophily.

- *Status homophily* refers to what Marsden (1990) considers attributes of the person. It "includes the major sociodemographic dimensions that stratify society—ascribed characteristics like race, ethnicity, sex, or age, and acquired characteristics like religion, education, occupation, [social class, network position] or behavior patterns" (Lazarsfeld & Merton 1954 as quoted on McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001:419).
- *Value homophily* "includes the wide variety of internal states presumed to shape our orientation toward future behavior" (McPherson *et al.*, 2001:419)

As internal states are hard to evaluate directly, for the purposes of this project homophily has been operationalized as *status homophily*. Dummy variables recording race, ethnicity, sex, age, religion, education, and occupation were used to control for group assignments.

Heterophily is defined as observed dissimilarities (Rogers & Bhowmik, 1970-1971). This conceptualization opposes homophily. For the purposes of this project this construct was operationalized as the differences in observed characteristics including race, ethnicity, sex, age, religion, education, and occupation.

Propinquity is defined as closeness and, in the context of social networks, it refers to either geographical proximity or perceived geographical closeness (McPherson *et al.*, 2001). The former may be defined as absolute geographical distance. As such, it is operationalized under pre-established measures of distance where proximity is described as a function of the physical space between two ties. The latter instance is construed based on personal perceptions of nearness where individuals define distance based on personal perceptions. While absolute geographical distance has the benefit of a

standardized measure, it does not take into account personal mobility or personal preferences. Furthermore, a community like Easthampton, where everybody lives and/or works within 5 to 15 minutes walk of each other, that has a single local supermarket and business district, makes it is hard to evaluate relevant differences. Perceived propinquity does not assume equal conditions among all ties, thus, allowing for a more accurate measure of closeness where each person reports how far he or she perceives to be from others. For the purpose of this project, propinquity was operationalized and measured as perceived propinquity thus individuals were asked to name their relationships and ranked them in terms of perceived distance.

So… Why Do People Get Into Relationships Around Here?

Using the information collected from the questionnaires that explored the above introduced constructs I evaluated the one-to-one relationships of artists and artisans around town. Why do people relate to each other? What do they seek when engaging other individuals? These were the underlying questions that framed this part of the project and reflected some of my conversations around town.

As a first step all items for *trust* (10-items), *affinity* (6-items), and perceived *propinquity* (2-items) were incorporated on a single construct of 18 items. This was performed as an opening attempt to explore the full complexity of the relationships among artists and artisans as members of an emergent creative class and to test for its underlying assumptions. Reliability and consistency were evaluated to verify if there were independent loadings of the three domains, or cluster loadings for items across domains suggesting new constructs. The preliminary analysis was done controlling for homophily and geographical propinquity. As a result, the data set was reduced to 189

dyads which satisfied the minimum amount of data for factor analysis, with over 10 cases per variable for the initial run. The Cronbach's Alfa value for the 18 factors was 0.912 (n=189).

The factorability of the 18 items was examined. Several well-recognized criteria for the factorability of a correlation were used. Scree Plot and the component matrix suggested the presence of 4 factors. However, high cross loading values indicated the need to eliminate multiple items. A closer inspection of the loading values, a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of 0.862 and a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity confirmed that the data may be grouped into a smaller set of underlying factors. Finally, the accumulated variance for the 18 items only accounted for 69 % of the total variance which confirmed the need for further analysis.

To eliminate the first set of items, a theoretical understanding of the constructs and an empirical analysis of the items was followed. The 18 items were analyzed to determine which one could be purged before proceeding with a second numerical analysis. Items in the category of trust were removed as they did not truly represent the nature of the relationships among artists and artisans in the context of the domains of interest. Trust items in this project were divided in three groups; emotional support, material support, information / advice and aid. Emotional support issues were not relevant in this context as individuals did not primarily seek empathy or to be liked in the relationships framed by any of the three domains. As several artists and artisans expressed during conversations; they sought others "to work with" or "to collaborate" not "to go on a night out." Furthermore, elements of trust were already embedded in other items as suggested by the cross loadings. Material support was removed as it prompted

notions about sharing materials, tools and work space. This kind of sharing happened more among cabinet makers than among any other artists or artisans' community –as it was observed in the ethnographic work and the archival data. Yet none of the members of this artisans group answered this questionnaire thus these items were not present in the loadings. Furthermore, the diversity in the media used by the artists, and the strong sense of individuality on all their works, made sharing tools a limited occurrence in this particular community. Finally, the size of the local arts and crafts community and the limited number of individuals working with each medium (i.e., oil painting, stone carving, digital images) decreased the analytical value of this item since most people only could shared with one or two others at most and in very rare occasions. Likewise, information / advice followed the same patterns of relationships as material support. The final category of trust; aid, was not relevant to these relationships as it addresses issues of help that are not related to the domains framing the research. For instance, people do not have colleagues as emergency contacts; they would rather contact close relatives and friends. In a similar manner, long term help comes from family and close friends and not neighbors at the workplace.

Perceived propinquity was eliminated for there were issues of membership at the different small art communities (i.e., buildings) across the different art communities making it difficult to quantify this category. As explained already, the local art community is mainly located in three large former factory buildings in different parts of the town. Because of historical reasons (e.g., when the buildings first opened as studio space) residents at each building have their own collective identity which competes with the identity of the other groups. Yet, people working in the same arts or crafts often try

to break away from this clustering and bridge across those working in another building but in a similar art or craft. These dynamics result in a mixed reading of who is close or not to whom, which is better understood in terms of affinity.

Most affinity measures were kept as they reflected better the nature of the community and the way that artists and artisans expressed their relationships through interviews and the ethnographic work. In general, individuals within this group referred to their relationships as seeking people that "are like them". When pressed on this issue they talk about values and interests. Affinity is theoretically defined as having two factors; emotional affinity and social affinity. Emotional affinity addresses values, interests and empathy. Social affinity focuses on social similarities, evidenced by the concrete actions of individuals. Social affinity accounts, as well, for the clustering of the individuals within each building in town and the bridging out that individuals pursued when seeking advice. The idea that an action is worth a thousand words permeates this construct, making trust it underlying premises. As one of the respondents put it in a casual conversation; *"… with him I can work with, I've seen what he does so I know what [he's] up to.*"

Principle component analysis was run again on the remaining elements. This was done since the primary purpose of this exploratory work was to identify and compute factors describing the relationships among members of the creative class. The new factor analysis presented loads into two clearly defined factors. Initial eigenvalues showed that the first factor explained 45% of the variance while the second factor accounted for another 35% of the variance. This two-factor solution, which explained 80 % of the total variance, was preferred based on the theoretical aspects previously discussed. The

'leveling off' of eigenvalues on the scree plot after two factors, the insufficient number of primary loadings, and difficulty of interpreting all 18 factors also determined the preference of these results over the previous run. A varimax rotating solution presented two clearly defined factors with loads of three (Emotional Affinity) and two (Social Affinity) items respectively. The final Cronbach's Alpha value based on standardized items for the five selected components loading into two factors was 0.826 with n=189. The factor loading matrix for this final solution is presented in

Table 6.

Table 6: Rotated Component Matrix

		Component	
		1	2
Emotional Affinity	A1_Emotional_Share_1	0.891	0.210
	A2_Emotional_Share_2	0.845	0.281
	A3_Emotional_Share_3	0.804	0.144
Social Affinity	A4_Social_1	0.231	0.894
	A5_Social_2	0.202	0.901

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

The first three items correspond to *Emotional Affinity* as they ask respondents issues of emotional empathy. The first item "We share values / perspective" addresses how much emotional commonality exists between members of the dyad. The second item "We are equally concerned about the same issues" confirms the first item and speaks about shared personal perceptions of what is important or not. The last item "He / She 'gets me' " speaks of a feeling of acceptance where the respondent assumes the other persons may understand him / her without judging.

Social Affinity is captured on the last two items which load on the second factor. The first item "We hang out with the same crowd" addresses issues of social similarities as well as underlying issues of geographical propinquity. The second item "We often run into each other at clubs and meetings" reinforces the ideas of the first item but includes a new element as it speaks of sharing personal interests and personal routines.

The loading of the factors served to describe the nature of the relationships among local artists and artisans as well as people engaged in relationships with them. They are individuals that seek to share social spaces and personal goals. They are not in search of advice or material support but want to find social spaces to act and pursue personal goals that are shared with others. The power of their relationships, this analysis suggested, resides in the network of social and emotional support that they create that helps to bring them together and help them to act upon common goals. Multiple one-to-one relationships results in a large networks of individuals sharing interests. And if close neighbors feel the same (emotional affinity) and believe the same (social affinity) they are more likely to work together.

Trust oftentimes meant to take a chance and ask for an advice and, after getting the advice, believing that it was reliable. Talking to a graphic designer and painter that had her studio at the basement of Eastworks she spoke about the benefits of having her studio in Easthampton. According to her there she could find other "*equally good artists*" to bounce ideas. Trust –for her, as for many other local artists– was earned through proven artistic skills and accomplishments. Other kinds of trust, not captured by the questionnaire, came across through conversations and ethnographic work as I learned that people around the cabinet making and bookbinding community would share tools

and support each other. They displayed material trust and networks of support –their equipment is too expensive thus sharing is always an option that benefits them as a community.

In all, trust could not have happened if participants in the exchange were not in close physical proximity to each other and did not have something in common. Thus propinquity was an underlying, and oftentimes tacit, requirement that because of its ubiquitous presence was overlooked –people acted upon it but did not truly thought about it as reflected in the questionnaire. It is easier to seek advice, or to establish a relationship with your next door neighbor than with someone that is 3 hours away in Boston. Yet people did not truly realize that they were doing so. I saw them walking to their next door neighbors, I heard conversations about meeting each other yet they did not truly reported those actions in the questionnaire as they took them for granted. Nevertheless something even more important came across both in the ethnographic work and in the questionnaire: artists and artisans' relationships are built upon a "kinship of spirit." Or, as I heard more than once, they built their "relationships on solid grounds" – they have shared interests and shared backgrounds.

A Creative Class Network(ing)?

Around town affine people, who were in close proximity on a regular basis, were more likely to develop long term relationships –I found out through the micro-level analysis. Individuals that share living quarters, or work together or just gather on regular basis at meetings are more likely to engage in exchanges of information and/or resources. Recurrent informal conversations around town, I found through my ethnographic work, evolved in casual advices, friendships and even long term collaborations. Furthermore,

people meeting at purpose specific gatherings such as the Cultural Council, the Master Plan Committee or the Art Walk would share interests and goals that would help the establishment of linkages at the individual level among all members of the group. This was especially true for small settings where individuals would have plenty of opportunities to work together and to get to know each other. In a similar manner, becoming the point of contact at an organization, as it was the case for the artist working at the City Arts offices or those closely supporting the Art Walk, meant that people seeking services provided by these organizations would associate them with the individuals that would help them at these places. Especially if, as discussed above, affinity and homophily were present among neighbors.

Supported by the ethnographic work and borrowing from the above discussed premises I plotted a two-mode network (individuals and organizations) that encompassed the Easthampton's community (Figure 6). It is worth mentioning that households were also included and coded as organizations for the purposes of this analysis. The rationale behind this inclusion is based on this study's main interest; to explore the nature and extend of the artists and artisans' local organizing. Hence households were assumed to be just another kind of local organization where people talk, and share resources and information on regular basis.

This map of the community allowed me to identify the presence of a large component representing the interlocking of local organizations due to multiple affiliations of individuals (Breiger, 1974; Wasserman & Faust, 1994). This large principal component was the first indicative of a network around town where everyone was connected to everyone. It hinted that things happen around town not only because people

made them happen but because through their daily actions local organizing took place creating a local structure of support.

In addition to the principal component that represent the local community and their relationships, the analysis brought a collection of isolated individuals; people with associations that could not be corroborated (soft color vertexes at the bottom of Figure 6), a number of small components that represent individuals associated with a single organization (one black vertex linked to a soft color vertex), and an assorted number of organizations disconnected from the local community. Regardless of the reason, substantially small components, dyads, and isolates are not connected to the community at large (principal component).

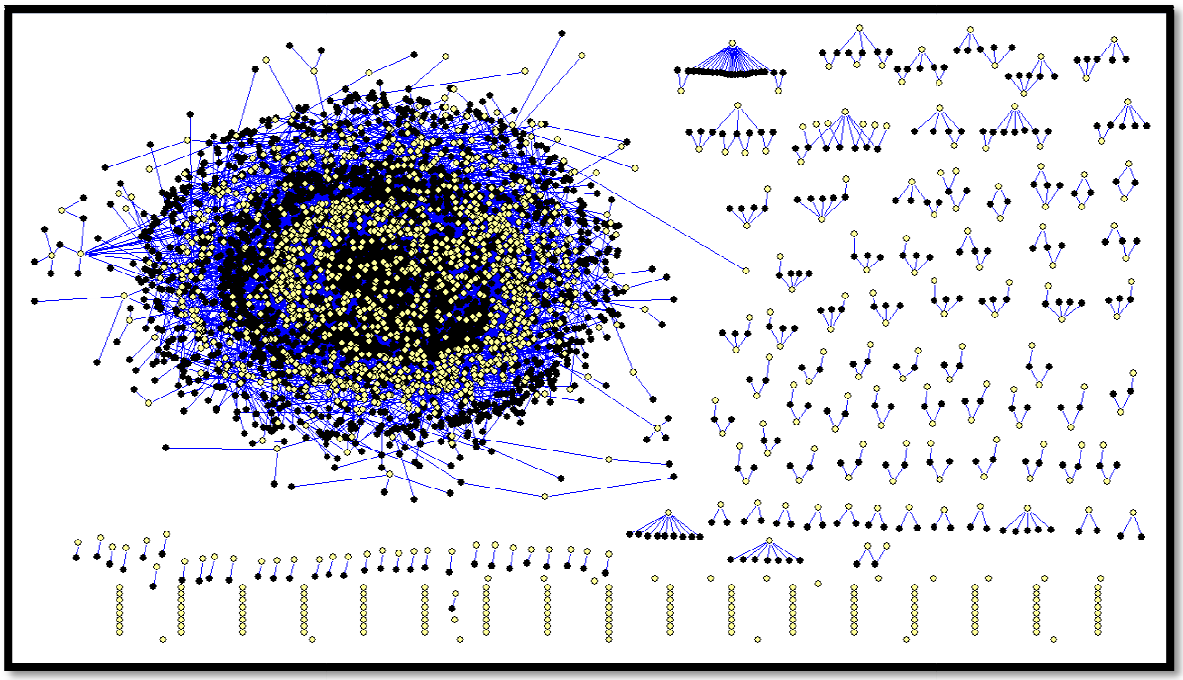


Figure 6: Selected Population Two-mode Network (Adjusted Kamada-Kawi Separate Component Analysis View)
[●] 1,924 light yellow vertex organizations (e.g., business, non for profits, government, households, etc), [●] 3,809 black vertex individuals.
Density = 0.00045

As the focus of this part of the work is to understand the overall relationships of the community isolates, dyads and small components were removed and the main component of the two-mode network was extracted (Figure 7). This new network reports a higher density than the original plot of all the relationships as the small components and isolates were not included.

After the extraction of the principal component, the new network includes 82.5% of the original organizations and 92.7% of the total documented population. These values confirm the importance of focusing on this component as the object of study. Furthermore they strongly suggest the presence of a local organizing bridging artists and artisans as well as people that engage them on regular basis. This structure, can be argued, may be evidence of the emergence of a local creative class. Or at least an indicator of a cohesive community sharing goals.

It is worth reiterating the empirical need to include households as they act as gathering places in the community. To test for the relevance of including households and organizations as part of the analysis a density analysis with and without households was run on this network. The two-mode density value for the principal component including households was 0.0012749. The two-mode density value for the same main component removing households and preserving all the rest of the organizations was 0.0012593. The two-mode density removing all organizations but preserving households was 0.0006989. These values suggest the importance of organizations in the context of this study and marginally justify the including households as part of the analysis. It is important to notice that in many instances artists and artisans that collaborate and/or share

organizational memberships also share households which accounts for the marginal effect of households in terms of the local cohesiveness as relationships are duplicated.

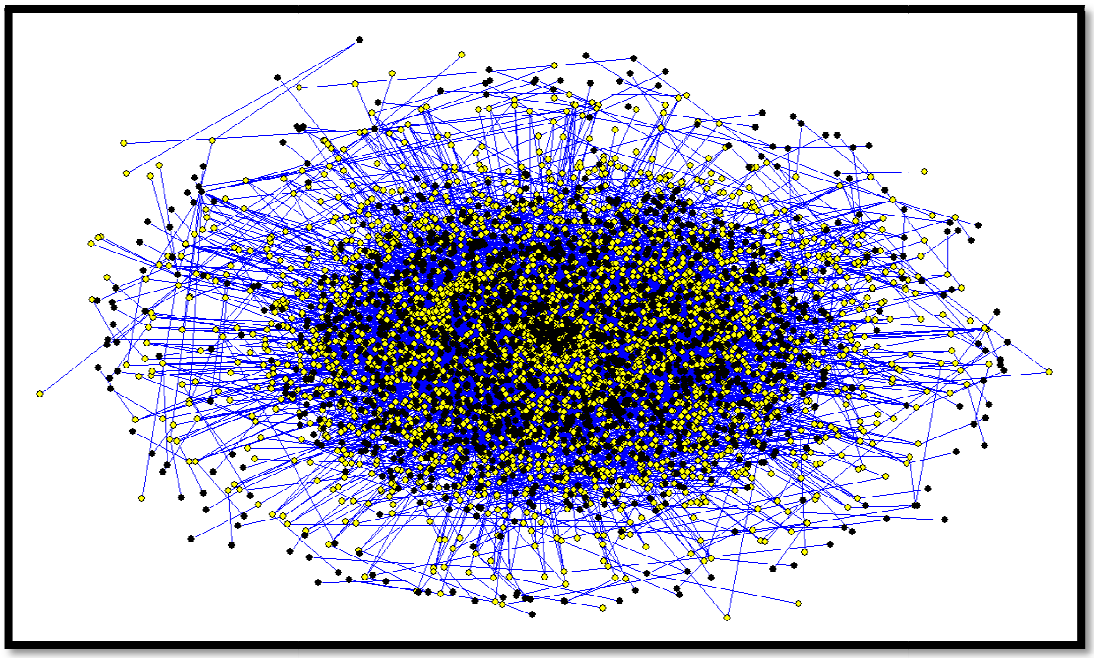


Figure 7: Principal Component Two-mode Network (Kamada-Kawi Separate Component Analysis View)
[●] 1,589 light yellow vertex organizations (e.g., business, not-for profits, government, households, etc), [●] 3,532 black vertex individuals.
Density = 0.0005457

The relatively high number of individuals in comparison to the number of organizations [an average of about two individuals for each organization in both the full network that included the isolates (1.97) and the principal component (2.22)] is largely due to a collection of individuals that act as free agents in the community. They run their own business, and/or live alone. It also reflects a large number of organizations that are task specific with very short life spans –such as the monthly Art Walk that last only one day a month and has different participants every month. It is worth noticing that most of

the one-person organizations are composed by small businesses or artist and artisans selling their art and craft and representing themselves.

Following with the research agenda, this new network was transformed into two distinctive one-mode networks; one for individuals (meso-analysis) and one for organizations (macro-analysis) shown in Figure 8. The network of individuals addresses the meso-level analysis as it serves to evaluate the role of artists and artisans in the community's processes. In particular it looks at how their presence may or may not significantly affect the local dynamics. The network of organizations focuses on the macro-level and serves to explore (1) the local community socioeconomic structure, and (2) the tools used by members of the potential creative class to achieve positive change.

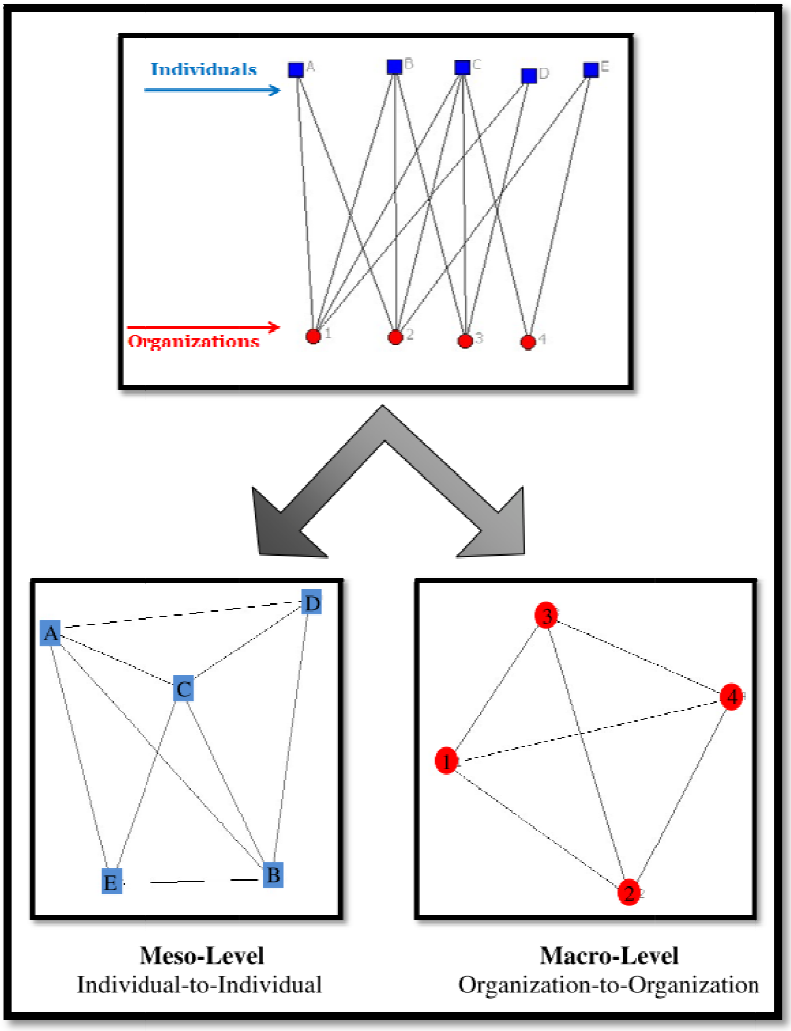


Figure 8: Transformation of a two-mode network into a one-mode network

The network of individuals (Individual-to-Individual) presumes that people sharing memberships in organizations sustain a relationship among them. The strength of their relationship between individuals is defined by the number of times that both individuals share membership at different organization. Thus if two (2) individuals belong to the same four (4) organizations, then a line connecting both individuals will be presented with a strength of 4.

The network of organizations (Organization-to-Organization) is the representation of interlocking participations understood as individuals that belong to more than one

organization that linking them both. The strength of the relation among organizations is defined by the number of individuals shared by both organizations. Hence if there are three (3) individuals belonging to two (2) given organizations then a link of strength of 3 will be reported as connecting both organizations.

Meso-level: Artist and Artisans as Social Glue (or not)

The **meso-level analysis** in this project explores the social network composed by the members of the local community. While the earlier micro-level analysis focuses on the individual's personal networks (ego network) to explore the characteristics of the one-to-one relationships (dyads), the meso-level builds on the micro-analysis to develop a picture of the town's socioeconomic processes as a whole –and the role of artists and artisans within that organizing.

To overcome the challenge of having everyone in the city to report their relationships, the meso-analysis borrows from the previous micro-analysis and assumes that individuals belonging to the same organizations have similarities that are crucial characteristics of the presumed relationship (Marx & Spray, 1972). As such, I build on the underlying premises of homophily (McPherson *et al.*, 2001:419) and affinity (Levin, 2007; Ruyu & Kuperman, 2007), and advance that people belonging to the same organizations sustain relationships among them (Breiger, 1974; Wasserman & Faust, 1994).

These memberships or affiliations, often referred to as institutional or "structural", while may not tell exactly which people interact with each other they let us infer that there is a fair chance that people will relate to each other –specially in the pursuit of common interests. In the particulars of Easthampton it was my experience doing

ethnographic work, that people meeting on regular basis around town in search of a common goal and those sharing organizational memberships and/or affiliations would eventually develop a relationship, even if it was only to support a temporal common interest. For instance, when one of the members of the Cultural Council had to undergo a very stressful medical examination other members of the council offered to go with her and to keep her company. Likewise the current head of the Cultural Council would, on regular basis during summer time, extend to all members of the council an invitation to enjoy the park concerts from her balcony that overlooks the gazebo. Another more interesting example that had recently developed is the new focus of the Art Walk. While the event still holds its premises of promoting the town and the local arts, it has become, within many of the members of the local arts community the appointed social time to catch with each other. Using Facebook, email and even regular phone calls, many of the members of this group make a point to meet each other at this monthly event. Thus adding a new layer to it; it is the place to be for the local social scene among artists and artisans active in the local community.

The Local Network of Individuals

Once the bi-modal network of individuals and organizations was plotted and the principal component was identified, the next step was to develop the network of individuals. To this end, as it was earlier discussed, I assumed that people sharing memberships will hold a relationship among them –as I had seen it happening around town. Furthermore, the more people would share memberships, the stronger their relationships will become as they would have more elements in common and would spend more time together. Thus if 2 individuals belong to the same 4 organizations, like

several members of the council did (they were part of the chamber of commerce, the Art Walk and the City Arts, besides sitting at the Cultural Council), then the line connecting each pair of individuals had an strength of 4. This relationships' strength value was assumed to be scale free as there was no theoretical or empirical limit to the number of memberships people could share. The only restrictions that project imposed were that individuals took part in organizations located within the town, and that these organizations require from their members to interact with each other from time to time during the period of the observations.

The resulting network produced a one-mode network of 3,532 vertexes corresponding to each one of the original 3,532 individuals present in the prior two-mode network. The total number of 241,295 lines indicates the total number of relationships in the network. This number of lines included 223 loops. These loops were recorded as individuals, at some instances, held more than one role within the organization thus creating a link to themselves –e.g., treasurer and performer, board-member and staff. As the next step, framed by the research focus, a new network without loops was plotted so only relationships among individuals were (re)presented. The new total number of lines was 241,072. Because of the size of the network and the small number of loops in it the reported density with or without loops was of 0.0386 (See Figure 9).

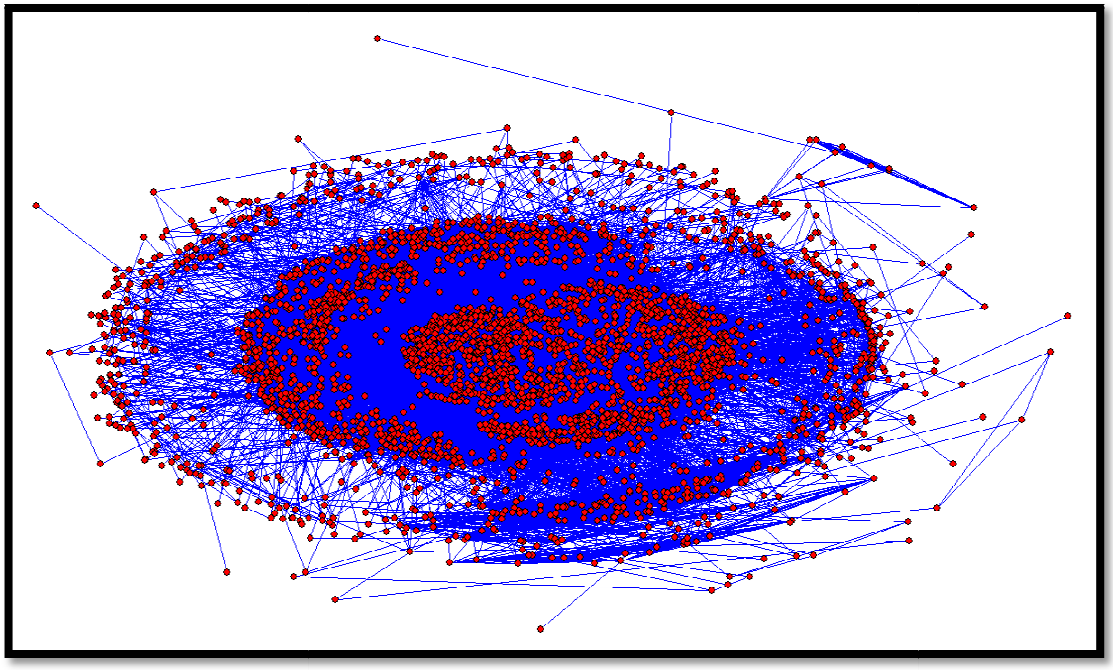


Figure 9: One-mode Individuals Network of Principal Component
Number of vertices (n): 3532;
Density with / without loops = 0.0386

This network shows 191,442 lines with a value of one and 49,630 lines with values larger than one. This means that there are a large number of members of the Easthampton community that only share membership at one organization. This is in large part due to events such as the Windows Project that happens once a year and where emphasis was given to have "something different every time" –as it was stated at one of the curating meetings by the at the time council chair. Likewise, events and organizations with goals so different that did not allow for much overlapping in memberships contributed to this issue. An example of this was the *Gun & Fishing Club* (focused on fishing and hunting) and the *Pascommuck Preservation Society* (focused on wild life preservation).

More relevant to this work than single memberships, were instances of multiple memberships and/or multiple meetings where people gathered on regular basis, became

familiar with each other, and developed joined agendas. Of this kind of relationships I found 48,739 lines with a value between 2 and 18. This means that 48,739 pairs of individuals in the community shared memberships in any number of organizations between 2 to 18. These organizations and events included the Master Plan Committee that met at Sub-committees and special events, artists and artisans participating in more than one Art Walk, people volunteering around town in community projects and individuals sharing responsibilities at local boards of non-profit organizations. The importance of this group deems a closer look to explore with more detail the level of relationships among individuals in this range (See Figure 10).

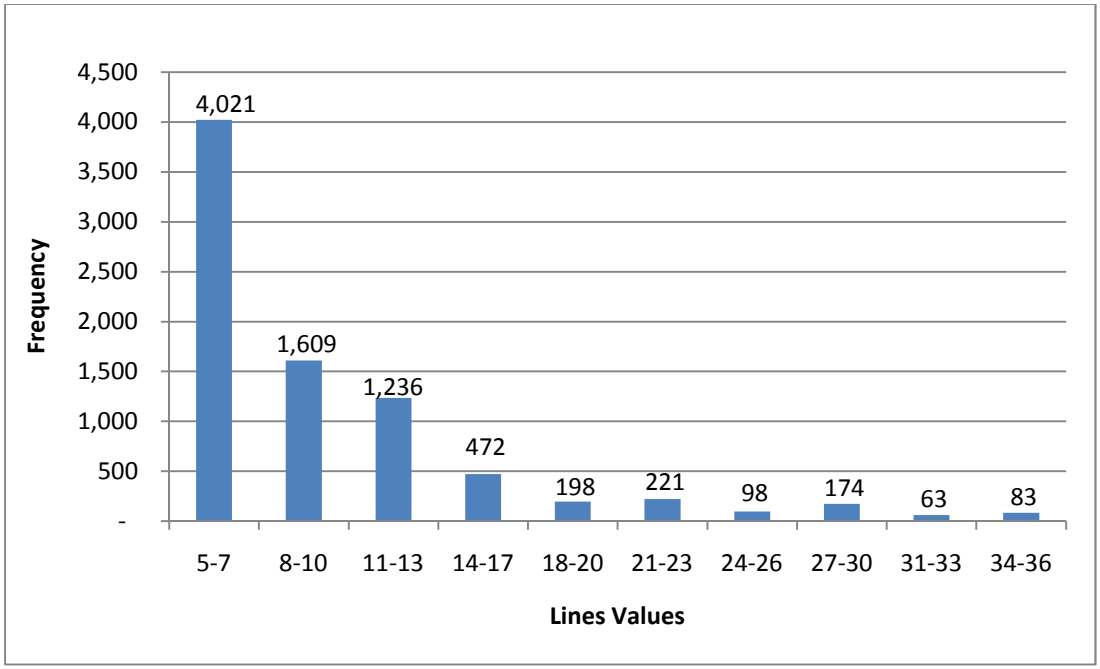


Figure 10: Frequency Distribution of the Lines Values for the Affiliation Network of Individuals (Ranges 5 – 36)

As shown in the above histogram, for the range from 5 to 36, there is a fair level of relationships happening within Easthampton. Besides the values described in the

above histogram there are 141,278 lines with strength between 1 and 4 linking equal numbers of pairs of individuals. In all, there are 3,532 individuals sharing 241,072 relationships. This is about 68 relationships per person. However, the skewed values in the context of the ethnographic observations suggest that there are a selected few that hold large ego networks either by choice or because of their work. An example of people holding large networks include the town planner, the point of contact for City Arts, the administrative assistant for the local chamber of commerce, and the coordinators for the Art Walk. In all, there is a local network bridging many kinds of local constituencies including artists and artisans. Yet, the question remains: what is the role of the artists and artisans in this network? Or how do they "plug" in the local everyday life processes?

Affinity: Are Artists and Artisans Sticking Together?

As it was earlier discussed, the creative class argument implies that members of this group hold strong relationships to each other. Ethnographic work suggests that artists and artisans, exemplar members of the creative class, engage each other on regular basis in the context of the Easthampton's everyday life. Yet, the same ethnographic and the micro-level analysis on dyadic relationships and ego networks indicate that these relationships are not homogeneous, consistent or indiscriminate –they develop patterns. They vary through domains of interest. Artists and artisans seeking artistic –or "creative"– advice about works in progress (Art domain) may or may not contact the same people when they seek to sell or exhibit a particular work (Business domain), or when they need to discuss a personal matter (Lifestyle domain). Elements of propinquity (Back *et al.*, 2008), affinity (Ruyu & Kuperman, 2007; Sorenson, 2003) and trust (Gaggio, 2006; Paniccia, 1998; Wasserman & Faust, 1994) carry different measures and

rankings depending on the nature and context of each domain (Borgatti, 2005). These elements suggest the need of a more detailed analysis to better understand the nature and dynamics of these relationships so it can be determined if there is (or not) an emergent local creative class.

Exploring structural variables and local network composition is the first step in this analysis of the nascent of a plausible creative class. The structural variables, as their name suggests, describe the "structure" of their relationships and, by extension, the configuration of the overall network itself (Wasserman & Faust, 1994). As earlier discussed, the population of concern in this work consists of 3,809 members (Table 4). This group possesses the structural attributes as presented on Table 7.

Table 7: Easthampton's Community Structural Attributes

		Artist	**No-Artist**	**Total**
Resident	Female	84	890	974
	Male	83	825	908
No-Resident	Female	232	618	850
	Male	185	615	800
Total		**584**	**2,948**	**3,532**

Ethnographic observations in this work along with the ego network analysis are in line with theory that suggests that people is more likely to engage in a relationship with other individuals when they are perceived as socially close (social propinquity) and geographically proximate (geographical propinquity) (McPherson *et al.*, 2001). Nevertheless, in a community, such as Easthampton, individuals without synchronized schedules, and/or living and/or working away from each other, are less likely to

recognize each other as proximate even when they are next door neighbors, thus becoming less likely to develop a relationship. Likewise, individuals that meet on regular basis around town are considered neighbors (geographically proximate) and are more likely to be engaged in a relationship even when not living that close to each other.

Individuals that perceive each other as sharing life experiences and goals are more likely to engage in a relationship as they see each other as socially close (Levin, 2007; Ruyu & Kuperman, 2007) as it is the case of artists sharing the space within the three different art buildings in town. Furthermore, residents of these buildings when engaged in artistic pursuits are more likely to engage other resident artists rather than non-artists, in as much as non-artists are more likely to engage other non-artists given the choice. This is shown in Figure 11.

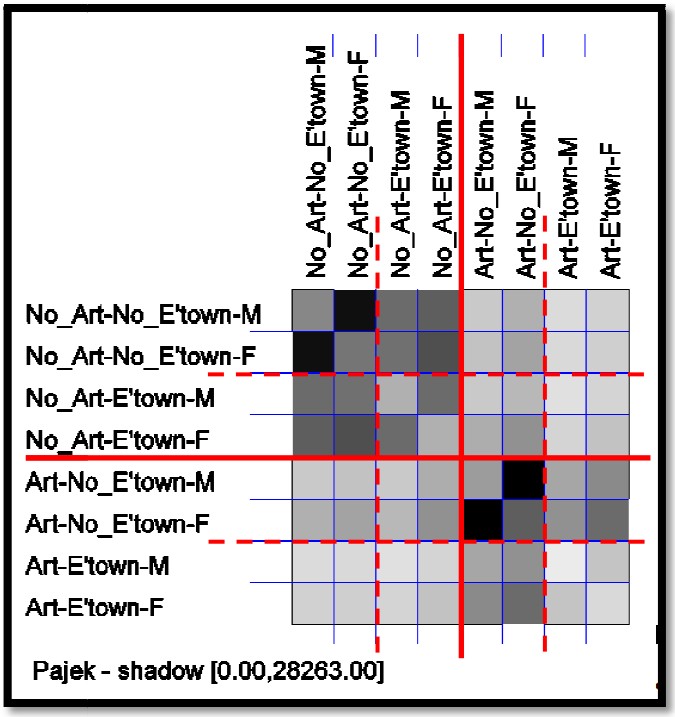


Figure 11: Blockmodel Analysis on Artists and Artisans Relationships in and out of the Community

The darkness of the shadow represents the intensity of the relationship between the two intersecting domains “No_Art” means non Artist / Artisan, likewise “Art” means Artist / Artisan. “No_E’town” means not a resident of Easthampton, while “E’town” means resident of Easthampton. “F” stands for Female and “M” for Male. On the upper left corner the relationships among non-artists / artisans are shown. On the opposite corner the relationships among local artists / artisans are shown.

To advance an answer to the question, do artists relate to artists? we can look at the above blockmodel analysis (Figure 11) and say “yes, they do.” However, at least in this community this is not a black and white answer as evidenced by the grey areas shading the matrix. This caveat serves to frame another answer about the role of the artists and artisans in the community. They relate to other constituencies besides artists and artisans, thus, acting as bridges across the community. Or in another words, they do not exclude relationships.

In overall, we can say that relationships in the Art community are complex and difficult to explain –as earlier presented when I discussed where all the artists were. This analysis suggests a counterintuitive point; non-resident artists use the local arts and crafts community to seek and establish relationships with other non-local artists. Furthermore, local artists have more and stronger relationships with non-local artists than with local artists. A tentative explanation for these points could be that a large number of the artists at the former mill buildings do not live in town. Hence, residents of these spaces are more likely to find non-locals around. This idea was reinforced while talking to people at the three large factory buildings in town. The concept of socializing was influenced by

their shared understanding that studios were thought, by the artists and artisans, as the equivalent of their office space; a place to work –*"you come here to work, it's not like you just hang around and talk to people. You know, you want things done so you can go home"* – I was told in a conversation by a pottery maker. Her point was emphasized by a picture of her husband holding their recently adopted baby pinned at a wall by her desk at her studio. Echoing these conversations another artist, a bookbinder at One Cottage Street said to me; *"it is not like when we were young, before I would hang around here all night. Now I am older, have a family and move out of town. But you know, I like the 'vibe' of this place. I guess that is why I keep coming here to work."* Going on these points he later said; *"I guess that I am not as much around, but neither the people that came here earlier with me. We are all, we mostly all, still here but you don't see us much because we want to finish and go home. We have families, but you know, we still hang together at times, we just have too much history together."* These statements question the argument about artists and artisans as local residents. Some of the artists and artisans at these buildings were local at some point but left to live in nearby communities –are they a local valuable resource at their home towns? At Easthampton they still care about the town and work around the city. They are participants at the Art Walk, they go to the local networking events and were strong participants of the Bear Fest.

All factory buildings, because of their use, serve as local poles of non-local artists. Furthermore artists and artisans by working in close proximity to each other, having to negotiate issues such as noise, help, o sharing tools –besides sharing personal histories– developed the outsider-to-outsider networks shown on the above blockmodel analysis. In contrast, most local artists have home studios. Thus they often work alone not

establishing a similar amount of relationships with other members of the local arts and crafts community. Hence doing art at home often times marginalizes the artists and artisans from their community. Nevertheless, events such as the Art Walk, the Bear Fest and the City Art have served to bring them as part of the local artistic context. It is worth mentioning that these local artists were driving motors of the activities that helped them to become locally relevant. A strong underlying context of the relationships among local artists is their need of "network" and "share." Oftentimes artists expressed that while they created for themselves they needed to share the creation as part of the process. *"You just don't make it and hide it. You put it where people see it and talk about it"* –was the comment from the former Chair for the Cultural Committee.

Other interesting issue derived from the above blockmodel analysis is the disproportionally larger number of relationships from male to female across all areas (males are more likely to relate to females than to other males). In contrast, female relationships are more evenly distributed across genders (females are equally likely to relate to males or females). While some may explain this as in part due to a larger population of females in the documented population (1,824 females versus 1,708 males) the small difference dismisses this claim. A better suited explanation comes from the ethnographic work; women were, in all, more involved thus more "recorded" as they sought more people while males were not that active hence only recorded as they related to women. Another explanation perhaps suits this community as well. The local individualistic male culture that had a strong legacy from times when the town was a factory town is bowing in favor of an emerging female culture that has found strength under the shadow of the cultural economy. Evidence for this last argument may be

observed in the arts-female categories of the matrix. While their relationships with similar others are stronger than with non similar others (supporting the earlier advanced homophily and affinity arguments), their links to non similar others appear to be, in average, stronger than other groups linking to non similar others. In other words, they relate well to each other, and in average as a group, they relate better to other groups than the rest do.

The resulting social structures, fostered by the early described relationships, sustain and craft the community as they serve to communicate rules, spread rumors, share resources and make alliances (Freeman, Romney, & Freeman, 1987; Lind & Herrmann, 2007; Schwammle, Gonzalez, Moreira, Andrade_Jr., & Herrmann, 2007). They provide a basic understanding about the patterns of local interactions -with whom, how and why people engage in creative class related relationships (Wasserman & Faust, 1994). They also provide a view of the local network's structural environment as the source of opportunities and/or constraints for the individuals' actions (Borgatti, 2005; Wasserman & Faust, 1994).

Are Artists and Artisans Bonding into a Community?

The previous discussion broadly describes the local conditions around the community, and in particular, with the members of the arts and crafts. It speaks of how artists and artisans relate to each other. In overall it advances that processes among artists and artisans create organizing patterns around the community. Furthermore it suggests that these patterns represent stronger relationships among artists and artisans than among non-artists and non-artisans yet it shows that artists and artisans are not isolated or detached from the community –even when the strongest relationships were

among non-local artists and artisans. The next step further explores if besides opening the community to the outside and bridging different groups together, the artists and artisans' relationships in general serve to strengthen the local community.

Using the same one-mode network of individuals derived from the principal component analysis of the two-mode network, this section seeks to account for other structural roles of artists and artisans in the community. To pursue this analysis first all the individuals of this network are coded on each one of the domains that they take part. After this, one domain at the time is removed from the network and the resulting centrality measure is recorded (Table 8).

Table 8: Centrality of the domains

		N	After Removing Domain		Variation	
			Density1 [loops allowed]	Density2 [no loops allowed]	Density1 [loops allowed]	Density2 [no loops allowed]
1	Advocacy Groups	448	0.0313847	0.0313949	0.007264	0.0072648
2	Art	656	0.0317599	0.0317709	0.0068888	0.0068888
3	Business Services	107	0.038101	0.0381121	0.0005477	0.0005476
4	City Governance	195	0.0371257	0.0371368	0.001523	0.0015229
5	Civic Organizations	1003	0.0289372	0.0289487	0.0097115	0.009711
7	Construction /Housing	184	0.0375156	0.0375268	0.0011331	0.0011329
8	Consumer Services	145	0.0356405	0.0356511	0.0030082	0.0030086
9	DisabilityServices	164	0.0377602	0.0377714	0.0008885	0.0008883
10	Education	654	0.0380993	0.0381125	0.0005494	0.0005472
11	Government	178	0.041125	0.0411373	-0.0024763	-0.0024776
12	Health	80	0.0369784	0.0369891	0.0016703	0.0016706
14	Manufacture	70	0.0391824	0.0391937	-0.0005337	-0.000534
15	Master Plan Committee	53	0.0385345	0.0385456	0.0001142	0.0001141
16	Retail	239	0.0318512	0.0318609	0.0067975	0.0067988
17	Software/Web -Graphic design	38	0.0376837	0.0376945	0.000965	0.0009652

As shown in Table 8, the domains that have a larger influence in the network are Retail, Art, Advocacy Groups, and Civic Organizations. This is consistent with earlier analysis that suggests that the presence of the members of the Arts and Crafts community in this town help to integrate the community. The Art domain does not have the largest effect on the network's values of cohesiveness. The largest effect goes to civic organizations and advocacy groups. However, the arts community has a strong hold and membership on both, as suggested by the ethnographic work, which hints it as a major role in the community cohesiveness, after all.

Macro-level: A Network of Organizations

The **macro-level analysis** in this project addresses the artists and artisans' domains of interests within their community. In particular it pays attention to consequences of the artists and artisans' organizing. Even as the meso and macro networks are created from the same two-mode network (individuals and organizations) the use of the data differs with the change on focus from meso to macro. At the meso-level data serves to develop and explore a network of individuals. In contrast at the **macro-level** the focus is on mapping relationships across organizations to understand the community by looking at the unfolding of artists and artisans organizing.

The Network of Organizations

The network informing the macro-level analysis is comprised solely by local organizations (events) sharing at least one individual (actor). Developed from the original two-mode network of Easthampton, this map of local processes represents all local organizing by mapping the links among organizations. These linkages are neither production chain connections nor economic exchanges. They are representations of the

organizing dynamics across organizations as they are manifestations of the networking of individuals. The presence of a link between any two organizations means that at least one person works and/or attend to events at both organizations. Likewise, if two organizations share more than one individual the value of the line linking them reflects the number of common individuals across them. If the organizations do not share actors then there is no line between them. In short, lines in the network indicate co-membership while the value of the lines shows the number of co-members linking the organizations.

The resulting one-mode network has 1,589 vertexes corresponding to each one of the original 1,589 organizations documented in the ethnographic and archival data collection. Likewise, a total number of 5,299 lines indicate the total number of relationships across the organizations in the network. These relationships include 1,589 loops. These loops represent those instances where, within organizations, there are different departments or areas where individuals play multiple roles thus creating relationships to themselves. For instance the local Chamber of commerce has a limited number of active volunteers participating in all the committees hence many of the volunteers are present in more than one committee at the time. Therefore the Chamber's affiliation data includes one loop for every volunteer working at more than one committee. To correct for this and to truly evaluate relationships across organizations rather than within, as a second step I removed the loops. The new total number of lines was 3,710 (See Figure 12 and Figure 13). It is worth mentioning that memberships in organizations were recorded as reported by the organizations thus only individuals considered to be salient members of the organization by the organization itself were documented. This meant that owners, managers, board members, and key personnel were

included. Additionally, as most of the organizations in town were very small businesses with less than 20 employees often times they listed all of them.

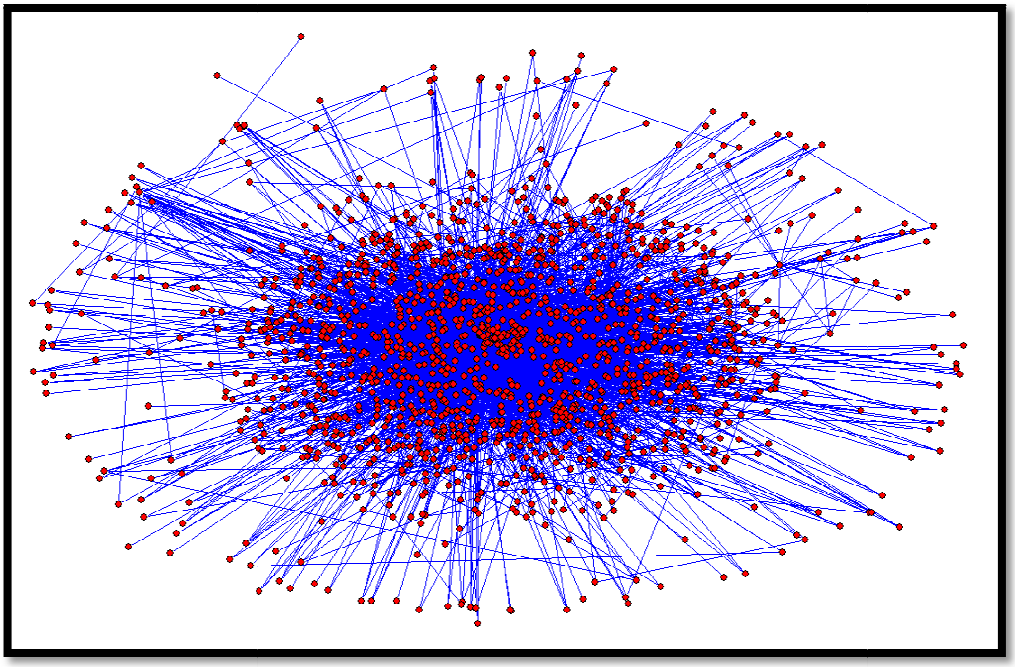


Figure 12: One-mode Network of Local Organizations
Number of vertices (n): 1589;
Density without loops = 0.0029

The resulting organizing map of the community included 2,752 lines with a value of 1. This means 2,752 pairs of organizations sharing only one member. In the context of this community this relatively large number of organizations linked by only one member is a direct result of the number of single owner businesses around town including the local artists and artisans representing themselves as studios. These one-person organizations hold memberships at the chamber of commerce, the City Arts, worked with the Master Plan Committee and participating at the monthly Art Walk thus having the same person linking across all organizing events and increasing the number of linkages across organizations, and in the network as a whole. Additionally, 818 organizations in Easthampton share 2-6 members, 65 share 7-12 and-so-on-and-so-forth (see Figure 13).

The presence of all the linkages across organizations is particularly important as they show evidence of local organizing. It means that local individuals come together, on regular basis, to discuss local problems, share resources and leverage each other in the local sociopolitical landscape.

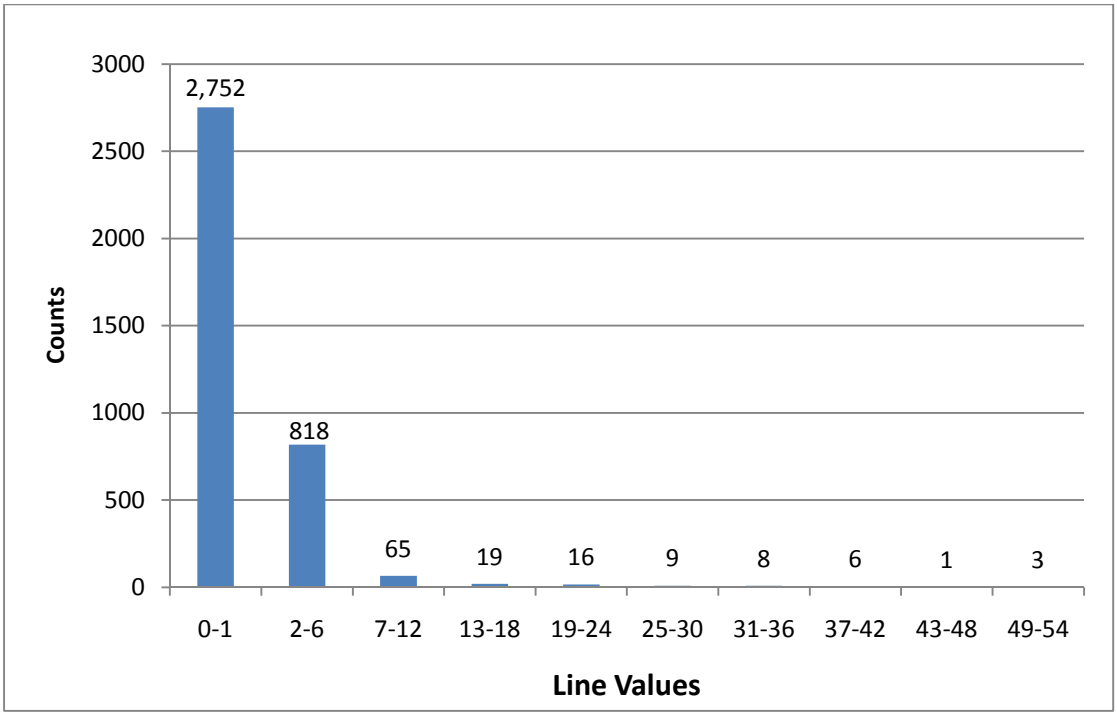


Figure 13: Details of the Affiliation Network for Organizations

Another issue worth mentioning is the size and nature of the organizing. Since the whole town has only 13,596 inhabitants having 3,532 individuals sharing the control of the main 1,589 local organizations –including the government and households– suggests a community where a moderate number of people encounter each other on regular basis when engaging in business, public activities or lobbing to pursue personal interests. Thus, it is important to understand what kind of organizations share members

and what type of position each kind of organization holds towards the others in the overall local organizing map.

Mapping Organizing Across the Community

Where are individual arts organizations located in the local socioeconomic organizing? Are they linked to other non-art related organizations? Are they a prominent part of everyday life? While the early part of the macro analysis supports the idea of local organizing across the community, as evidenced by the links across organizations, it does not address the issue of where the actions of artists and artisans become located in the local socioeconomic landscape –and their local consequences.

To locate the organizing actions of artists and artisans and to determine their relevance for the local community I evaluated the main domains of activities within each organization. Since these are processual analyses of a community, both social and economic relationships were included (Granovetter, 1985, 1991, 1992; Granovetter & Swedberg, 1992). As the first step in this analysis, using the ethnographic and archival data I coded all organizations (i.e., vertexes in the network) based first upon the nature of their activities and later within one of seventeen categories that best represented the operational purpose of the activities (See appendix F for a list of the coding). Each one of the seventeen domains is exclusive thus no organization may belong to more than one domain at the time. Art Studios were coded in the domain of art, Non Profit Organizations were coded based upon the goals of their operations, Governmental Offices were marked as Government, and-so-on. Once I have coded all the organizations I re-coded them to verify their proper allocations.

The goal of the classification and coding was to obtain a global view of the organizing processes within the community by replacing organizations and aggregating them within domains (Wasserman & Faust, 1994). This provided me with a general understanding of the domains within the network expressed as the organizing of activities and the relationships in the context of the community's everyday life (Figure 14).

A quick visual inspection of the new network confirmed the ethnographic observations that identified the planning services used by the community as outsiders – they were located at the far out upper right hand of Figure 14. The planning activities were subcontracted to a firm outside the community. Members of the firm had no relationship to the town other than their contract. The involvement of this firm in the planning dynamics of the town was limited to pre-appointed times and days thus lacking a relationship with the members of the community. During one of the Master Plan meetings, the main consultant of the group was asked by a member of the committee; "*what are we doing right?*" He was referring to a largely shared, at that time, understanding that there was a positive change happening in town. His concern was the voice of the collective trying to understand what was happening around them so it could be preserved. The consultant's answer tells it all; "*I don't know, but keep doing it!*" –as he nervously laughed. This conversation was not the first of this kind, nor would it be the last. As the meetings progressed the role of the consultants became defined as compilers of the information provided by the community rather than the advisors of the process. The town planner often stepped in the conversations to provide the answers and to moderate the conversations. He knew what was happening. At some point he said; "*we*

are talking to each other." He was aware that one of the main tools of change was the dialogue that had started and that he, unknowingly, was moderating.

The Manufacturing Activities were located the second farthest away vertex from the core in Figure 14. They were plotted at the lower left hand corner. Its position is a reflection of the de-industrialization of the community and the decrease in participation of the industrial leaders in the community organizing processes in general. At the Master Plan Meetings, the Planning Council sessions and open forums the "industrial leaders" of the community were regularly absent. The ethnographic notes did not include them as they were not there. Their records became their absence. Yet they were addressed from time to time as part of the local conversations. Concerns about the closing of what little was left of manufacturing facilities was always at the table especially with newspaper articles and Master Plan sessions rekindling the topic. Nevertheless the conversations with the owners and managers of the manufacturing facilities were always at close doors moving away from the community. Not completely gone or detached they were mapped closer than the external consultants in the local organizing landscape (See Figure 14).

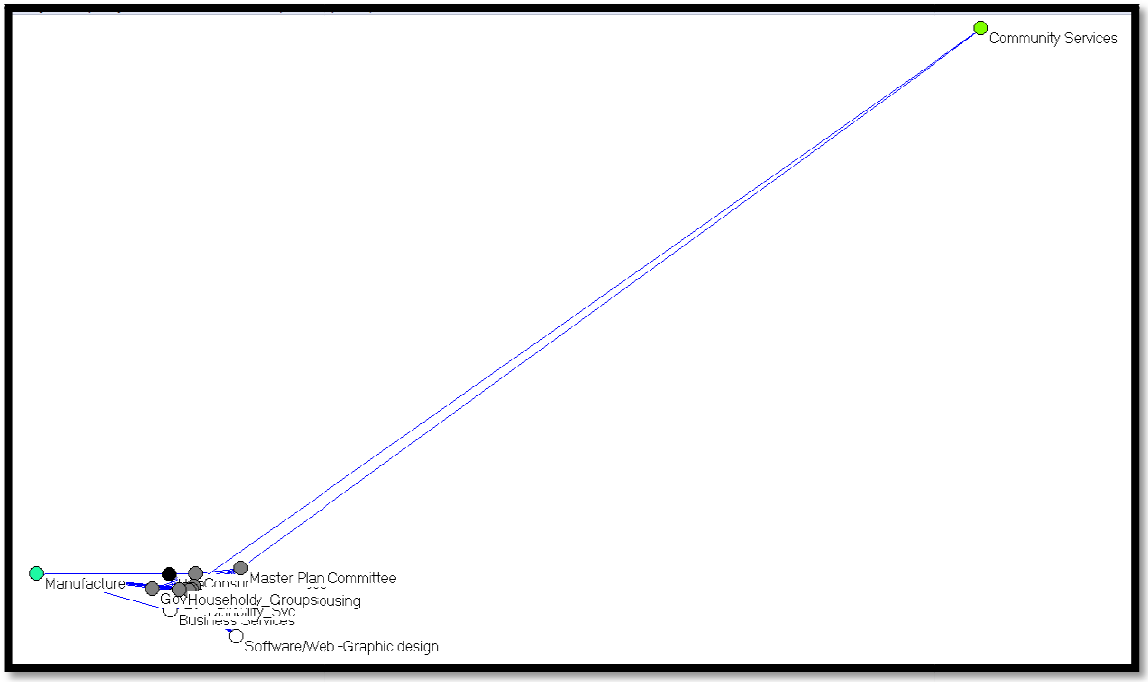


Figure 14: Global Network representation of Eashampton's Socioeconomic Structure (Kamada-Kawi Separate Component Analysis)
Density [loops allowed] = 0.7404844

As already mentioned the whole organizing map has 17 domains. Except for the Manufacturing, and Community Services (a.k.a. Planning Consultants) the other 15 domains are relatively close to each other and are located at the center. Their positions within the community were not easily determined by visual inspection. Thus a value sorted frequency histogram of the same data served to better visualize them and to identify their clustering within five main groups (Figure 15).

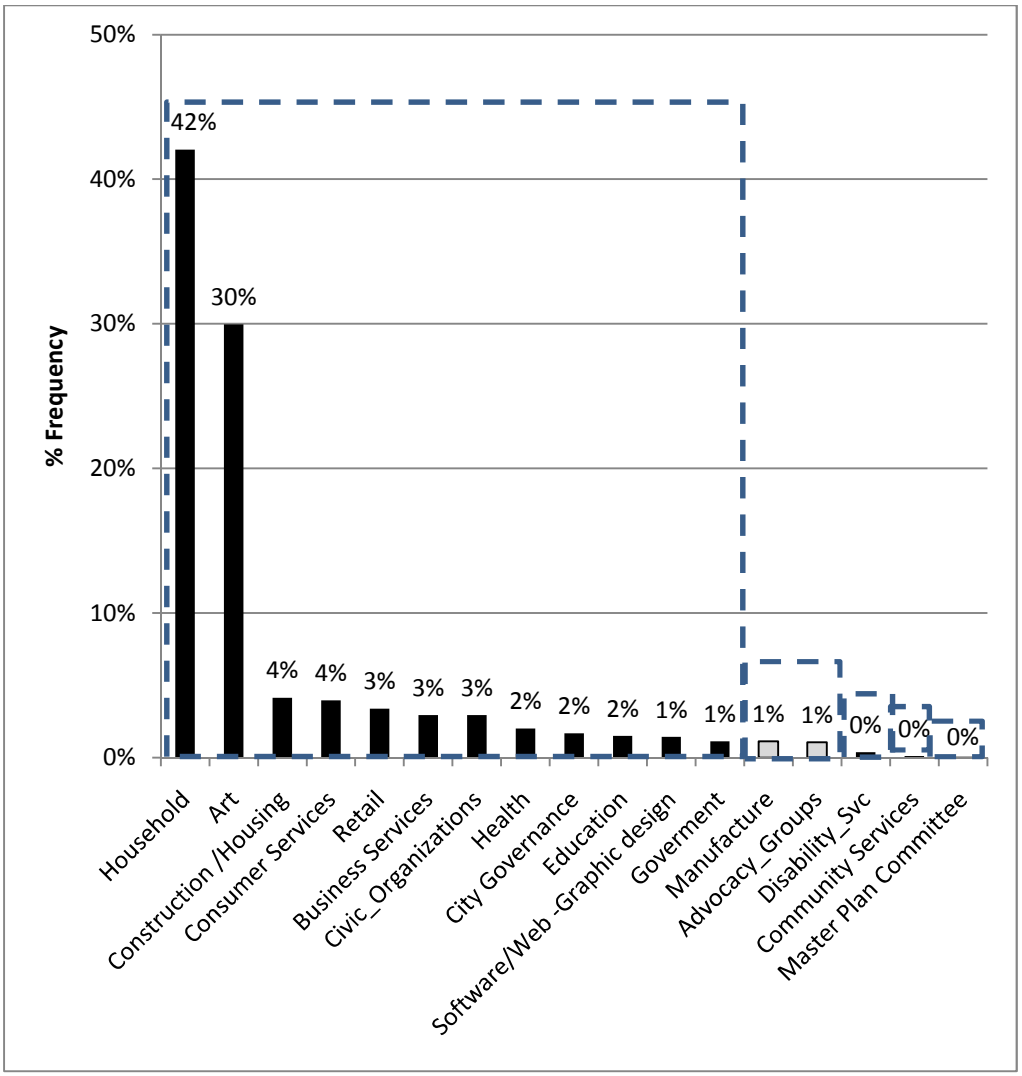


Figure 15: Frequency distribution of the *k-core* Analysis of Local Organizations

In general, the clustering of the seventeen domains (including the two earlier discussed) within five broad categories is consistent with ethnographic observations and comments made by different members of the community. They described Easthampton as a former mill town with a new interest in the arts; a place to live but "*not to buy a pair of socks*" –as expressed at one of the Master Plan Meetings by one of the participants.

This representation of the network serves to visualize the local social structures as observed during the ethnographic work. It gives a local context to actions of the

individuals as members of the community and as actors within each domain. The membership in the first Group (i.e., Household, Art, Construction/Housing and Services) suggests the relevance of the physical place as the local socioeconomic context in the analysis. The large value of Household as part of this group reassures the importance of the physical place and the relevance of the daily interactions as part of a community. The high values in the Art's domain –only second to Household– point towards the prevalent presence of arts as part of the community's everyday life. The other categories within this first group reiterate the ethnographic findings that suggest Easthampton as a place where people concurrently live and work –e.g., the embeddedness of the economic within the social. A place where most of the local jobs are done by locals –or people that feel local– yet not all residents have employment within the community. This core group put emphasis on local autonomy and the growing desire of self-governance and governing. It shows a solid community where ideas and common interests born from proximity are shared.

The second group, Manufacture and Advocacy_Groups presents a contrast that is better explained through the ethnographic work. As it has been mentioned earlier, the Manufacturing in Easthampton has been fading out for the last couple of years. Yet it is not completely gone. Individuals involved in this domain have been progressively moving away from the life in the community as show in the socioeconomic map in Figure 14. In contrast, Advocacy_Groups are moving towards the center of the community mostly pushed by the personal interests and lifestyle choices of the new local constituency including Artist and Artisans. Their vocal standings regarding the conditions on the community have found a growing force as they organize and

communicate. Members of the community supporting the preservation of local wildlife, new economic models for the community (E2M.org), the community development and art related events such as the Art Walk or the Bear Fest are examples of this category.

The Disability Services illustrates a growing culture of acceptance and integration in the community. Furthermore they show understanding of collaborative planning evidenced in the ethnographic work as I observed artists and artisans at One Cottage Street working in collaboration with people with disabilities. Yet the integration of people with disabilities in the community is not complete. It is still happening at the margins of the community which explains its position in the above distribution.

Community_Services (a.k.a. community planning consultants) and the Master Plan are located at the tale of the distribution. Their position highlights at the same time the distant nature of the advising done by the planning consultants and the selective nature of the conversations and membership at the Master Plan Committee. While the participation at the Master Plan was open to all the residents of the town, those who got involved in the processes were individuals already engaged in other governing activities around the town. Their presence did not add much at the local conversation since their ideas were not completely original. The value of this event was nothing but to bring together everyone who may had an interest at stake.

Tools of Change: Artists and Artisans Organizing, Affiliations and Affinity

The first part of the macro-level analysis serves to broadly explore the local socioeconomic structures and the position of the domains of interest in the context of the town organizing. The initial work suggests that arts and artisans are part of the core of the community and as such are involved in its main activities. Framed on these ideas,

this second part of the macro-level analysis evaluates the tools used by Artists and Artisans to achieve their goals within the community. Using the one-mode network of organizations I explored which organizations people supported and which activities people participated in or sponsored the most. The idea behind this analysis was to learn where the people's interests lay in the context of their everyday life. This was achieved by mapping their actions and interests represented by their affiliation and membership to specific organizations.

These ideas are underlined by the principles of value homophile (McPherson *et al.*, 2001). Multiple individuals acting in a similar manner, associated with the same organization, may behave in a certain way because their personal choices and future actions are the sum of their personal interests. Unilateral affinity by each individual shaping and fostering his or her relationships becomes replicated by shared interests of other individuals. Personal similarities with others (e.g., sex, gender, age, similar background, education, belonging to the same group), not so much relying on a stereotype but rather feeling a common connection, influence the actions of individuals creating something than may be broadly qualified as a structural collective agency. Structural collective agency may be defined as the concurrent structurally coordinated collective of multiple individuals joined by nexus of affinity and homophily –an example of this may be grassroots movements.

The notion of a group of creative individuals working as a unit towards a common goal presumes a socioeconomic structure born from observed similarities between individuals that bring them together (Marx & Spray, 1972). As such, it frames the creative class as a group of individuals with similar *status homophily* [e.g., race,

ethnicity, sex, or age, and acquired characteristics like religion, education, occupation, social class, network position or behavior patterns" (Lazarsfeld & Merton 1954 as quoted on McPherson *et al.*, 2001:419)]. Hence, it is presumed that ego networks among members of the creative class are "homogeneous with regard to many sociodemographic, behavioral, and intrapersonal characteristics" (McPherson *et al.*, 2001). By extension the in-degrees and out-degrees of the multiple ego networks of the members of the creative class may overlap creating larger homogeneous structures –as shown earlier in the micro level analysis

In all, the questions remain; is there evidence of a socioeconomic structure born from the shared actions of artists and artisans? Is this structure related to local positive changes? To explore these issues I continue to look at affiliations of individuals and the patterns that resulted from their multiple associations with organizations. A weak component analysis with values larger than two suggested the absence of isolates or independent components. A Kamada-Kawai analysis of the principal component showed a unique local structure. First, it confirmed the demographics and archival data portraying that a large part of artists and artisans although do not live in town –as earlier discussed– they are in constant collaboration with each other and other local organizations. Households are mostly located in the periphery, linked to / and linking local organizations. A dense central core shows the local nature of most organizations. An overlapping section of the core indicates the space where arts and local business intersect as part of the daily routines of the town. This is consistent with the earlier analysis that suggested that Art is part of the central structure of this community (Figure 16).

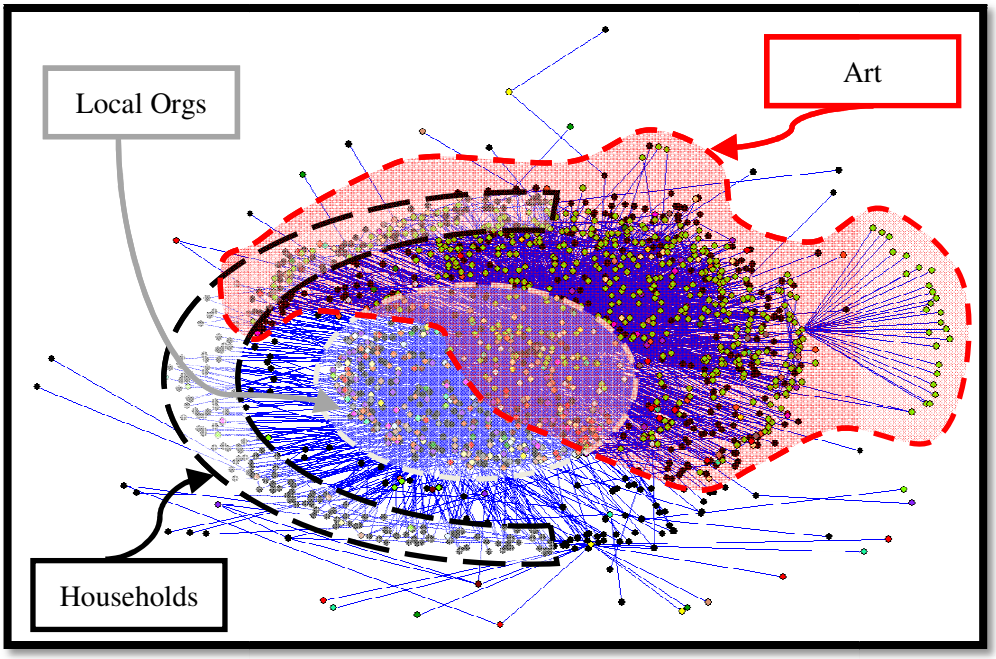


Figure 16: Kamada-Kawai Analysis of the Community's Network of Organizations

To further delve into the local structure, I proceeded with an *m-core* analysis. An *m-core* analysis serves to divide the network in a series of cohesive subgroups defined by the multiplicity of values of their connecting lines (Scott, 1991). This analysis shows which organizations –or events– share the most members in the city. The goal of performing this analysis was to identify strong patterns in the network and simplify its interpretation.

This analysis helped to determine the structural relationships in isolation of casual participation and engagements of members of the community. If a person assisted just out of curiosity to an activity under regular reporting conditions it would be accounted as a link between organizations. Yet, this casual attendance may not truly reflect local structures or recurring paths. To address this issue of casual participation I removed all lines with a value equal to one. While this practice serves to clarify the understandings of the community, it may create artifacts that will need to be later addressed as it may

remove unique relationships that offer important insights into the daily life of the community –fortunately, the ethnographic work served to address these issues.

This analysis showed, once again, a clearly defined principal component followed by a couple of very small components and a large number of isolates. The principal component was preserved and coded with the same seventeen domains of the community as before. After that, the vertexes were subjected to a Multidimensional Scaling of Geodesic Distances analysis. Nodes were coded based on their eigenvector values to facilitate the understanding and advance its exploratory power (Figure 17).

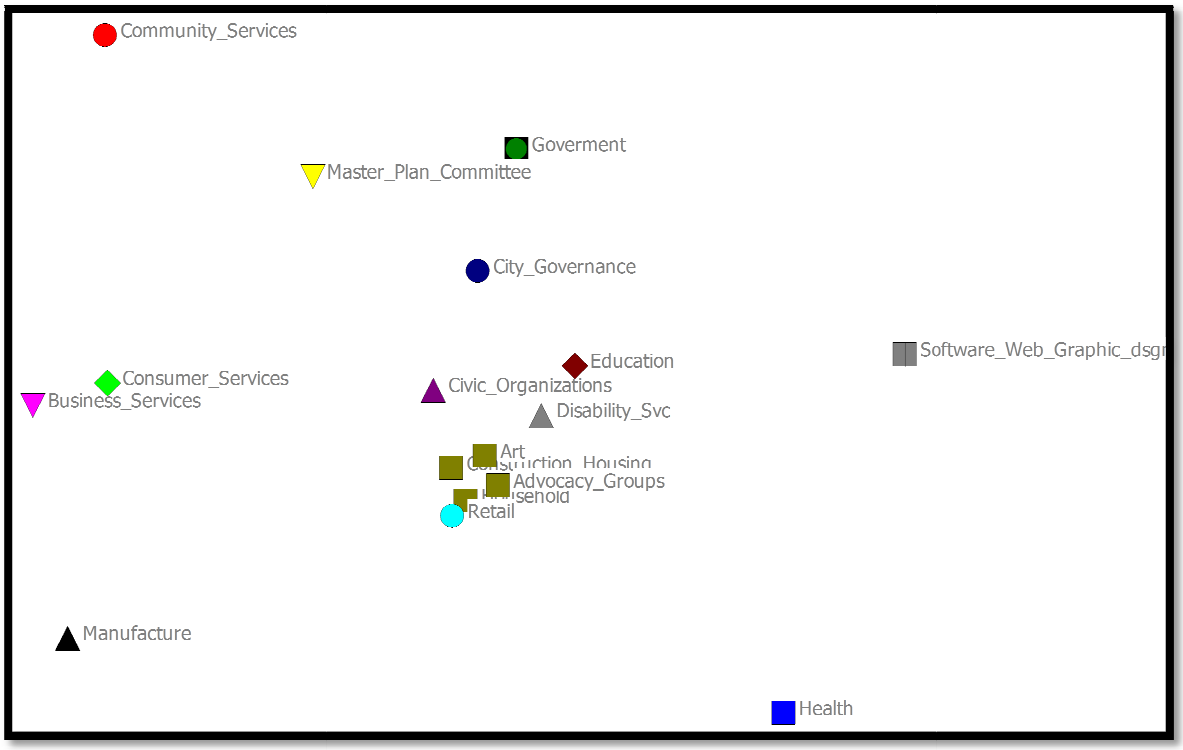


Figure 17: Multidimensional Scaling of Geodesic Distances Analysis
Density [loops allowed] = 0.5501730; 17-Vertexes, 84-lines

Figure 17 shows a similar picture to Figure 14, but with sharper boundaries, where Art is located at the core, along with Advocacy Groups, Households, and

Construction_rentals (almost at the center of the plot area). The distance among these four squares was exaggerated to allow its identification. This clustering may be explained in the context of the strong participation of members of the arts in public activities seeking to change the local community. The inclusion of Households among this group may not come as a surprise as it represents the link to Easthampton by those who live there (they have a physical presence and a personal interest). Construction_rentals can be either (or both) a reflection of the community as a living space or the result of the local 2004 construction boom. Yet, further work may be needed to clarify differences between construction of new houses and renovation and the influence of realtors in the community itself.

In close proximity to Arts, but not as part of the main group sits Retail (Blue circle). This domain includes all businesses that have direct sells to public in general. They are located in the community and used by most (almost all) of its members. This may help to explain its centrality in the Figure 17. Another issue that may influence its position is the local support of many businesses to local activities in the domain of the Arts and the fact that artists and artisans have increasingly sought relationships with local businesses as part of the *Art Walk* and the *Bear Fest* activities.

Opposite to Retail and farther from the core Disability Services, Civic Organizations and Education are found. Their proximity to each other and their middle distance the center may suggest their local importance.

Disability Services is very present in the life of the community and close to the arts as already described in the prior ethnographic chapter. One of the main art communities (One Cottage Street) shares space with a large non-profit (Riverside

Industries) devoted to help people with mental and physical disabilities. In another building the regional center of support for people with autisms has its headquarters. Time and again Art Walks have chiropractic practitioners as participants offering "healing art".

Civic Organizations is another domain close to the core, and in particular to the Arts. This can be explained by the number of involvements of members of the arts in civic organizations, only second to advocacy groups.

Education can be seen in the third distance of this second grouping. While education and Art have traditionally gone hand on hand, this has not being the case lately in Easthampton. Schools teach art but people participating in teaching and learning were not signaled as prominent in the community. Had the research lens captured the participation and activities of people under 17 years old, this observation might have been challenged. By showing their presence in the network and households we may gain an insight about how education truly fares in the network. As the analysis is right now only the relationships of people above 17 years of age teaching or participating in the teaching experience are documented, thus only focusing on teachers and administrative personnel at the local schools.

The Multidimensional Scaling of Geodesic Distances analysis shows the Master Plan, Government and the City governance almost equidistant of each other. Yet, City Governance finds itself closer to the core. This proximity may be due to the large participation of advocacy groups, civic organizations and arts in the town's everyday activities.

A surprising element was the positioning of Business services towards the outside of the graphic joined by consumer services. It may be argued that some of these activities are needed by households and retail. This should have served, if anything, to pull these domains close to the core. However, it was not the case. This contradiction may be explained by the nature of these activities, mostly small business, solely focused on their organization or consulting groups with broader interests than the community.

Health, Manufacture, Community Services and Software were located at the most outer part of the graphic, distributed almost in opposite directions to each other. Community Services are the out of town consultants hired by town officials to advise the local socioeconomic planning. They came in for a series of sessions a couple of times a month for over a year and then left. As part of their work they were in touch with prominent citizens and local business people. These restricted and targeted relationships can be gleaned from their location at the most extreme outer part of Figure 17. Manufacture has been leaving town for some time now. As such managers of the remaining organizations are not that present or influential in local activities as they were before. This echoes their position on Figure 14. Health, not surprisingly, was found in the outer reaches of the plot. Medical services in town mostly come from commuting practitioners. A quick visit to websites and inspection of local clinics show rotating schedules and non local names on the plaques on their doors. Finally, the Software and Web Design and Graphic Services were located at another extreme. This shows the isolated nature of some of the members of this group which is reiterated by ethnographic observations. For instance, recently there was a large web-comic convention and, despite

of its regional and to some degree national success, it was not fully acknowledged by the local community.

To expand the above discussion I performed a blockmodel analysis. This additional work confirms Art, the domain that encompasses the local arts and crafts community, as an important element in the town's fabric. Art is not only related to all activities in town but the strength of its relationship to them (measured as the structural density or interlinkedness) shows the relationship to be above-average in several of the cases, as indicated by the darker shades in the blockmodel analysis in Figure 18. This, alongside with the intense exchange of activities within the Art domain itself, suggests that members of this category may serve as funnels of information and resources as well as links within the different domains (Borgatti, 2005). It is worth noticing that the most connected domains –besides Art– are Advocacy groups, Civic organizations, and City governance –all strongly connected to Art (Figure 18).

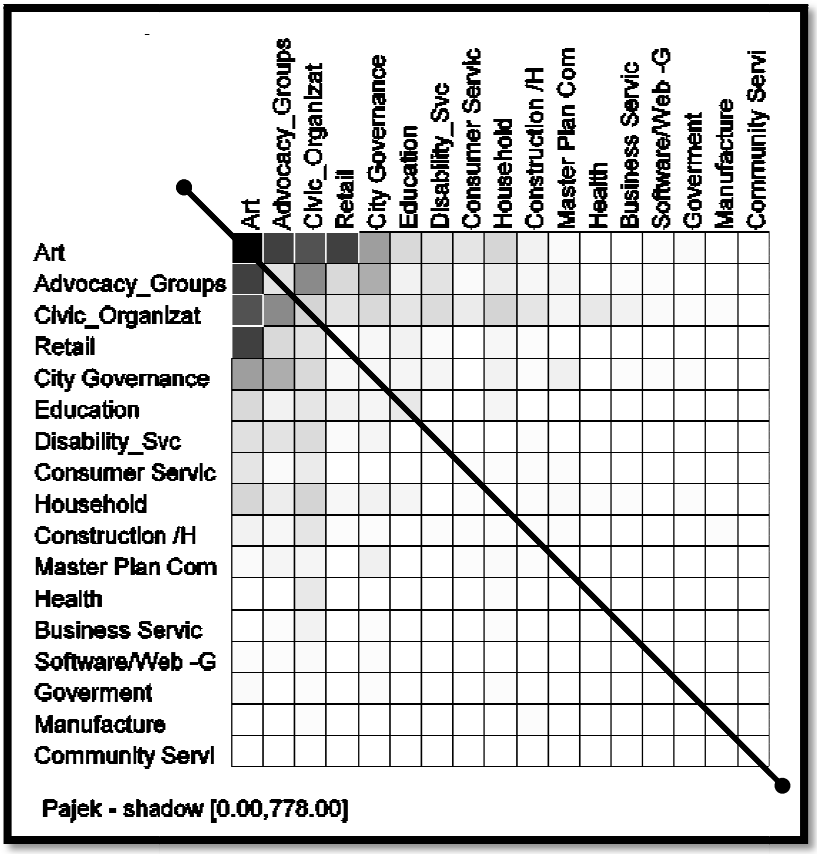


Figure 18: Blockmodel of Relationships Across Domains in the Community

The intensity of the shadow represents the intensity of the relationship between the two intersecting domains. Darker areas in the upper right section suggests that members of the Art community actively participate in Advocacy groups and civic organizations and that participants in civic organizations do so in Advocacy Groups as well.

Before going any further, it is important to highlight two relevant issues. First, the intersections in the above analysis (marked by shadows where the darker the shade the stronger the relationships) are not institutionalized relationships but linkages born from individuals participating in multiple projects and organizations. These intersections illustrate the actions and agency of the members of the community as they become

involved in different projects around town. Thus, they reflect the daily life of the community as its people constitute it.

Second, the matrix is symmetrical by design. Thus, the fact that the diagonal (marked by a thick solid black line) only shows relationships in the Art, Advocacy Groups, and Civic Organizations is interesting and perhaps worth of further research,. This suggests the dynamic nature of these domains where individuals participate in more than one organization, or cause, at the time. In the Art's domain, this may be explained by the constant participation of people in each other projects and in publicly open enterprises, such as collective art exhibits and performances. For the Advocacy Groups and Civic Organizations the internal relationships may come from people simultaneously involved in several causes either by actively doing things or by contributing with money to sponsor these efforts. An alternative explanation can be that while Civic Organizations and Advocacy groups have shared memberships, their effect may be magnified by the presence of a large population of members of the Art group constantly working with each other.

The original idea of this macro-analysis was to explore the means used by members of the creative class to influence their community. As the analysis progressed, it became evident that artists and artisans are social and political activists. As individuals they are strong participants in civic organizations and advocacy groups, yet the shared nature of their interests makes them act as a group. There are indications of strong affinity as artists and artisans relate to each other more than with the rest of the members of their community. Nevertheless, their engagements with other artist and artisans do not impair them to engage with other members of the community, even if it is at lower levels

of intensity than with their own peers. More important yet, is that these links to the outside of their own group appear to be, in average, stronger than the links that bound together other groups. This is evident by the lack of dark areas along the diagonal in Figure 18. This is particularly true and important in the case of the City Governance as well as the other influential groups of the community such as Retail and Education.

The relationship between the Art and Retail areas is relevant in particular because of its strength. This may be due to two main reasons. First, most artists and artisans try to sell their own art directly to the public, thus presenting themselves as retail centers. This bias was accounted for and eliminated when lines with value less than 2 were removed. The second reason may be because in the context of everyday life in Easthampton, the Arts and Crafts community holds regular exhibits using local business and shops as galleries reinforcing this relationship in a unique local way.

Households are another important category showing a relationship to Art and Advocacy Groups. In the case of Art, this may suggest that while a large percentage of artists and artisans are not local, as shown in the city demographics and the meso-level analysis, they are strongly related to city residents. The Household to Civic Organizations link may confirm the fact that civic organizations oftentimes represent local interests. What is more telling may be the lack of links between households and any other category but these two.

Values in Civic Organizations and Advocacy Groups corroborate the ethnographic work suggesting that these two domains share most of their constituencies. Values in Government indicate the isolated nature of this group. Only a very limited number of members of the Government domain are engaged in other domains, probably

because of conflict of interests and personal priorities. It is worth noticing that Government does not include Governance. Government only refers to public administration. That is why it is important to note its moderate relationship to the Art domain. Even at this moderate level, this relationship is stronger than the Governance relationship to Advocacy Groups and Civic Organizations. Finally, it is important to highlight the secluded nature of the Manufacture domain which echoes the reduction in the manufacturing industry around town.

Do I Have an Answer Yet?

Is there an unfolding creative class in Easthampton? Current ideas on the creative class call attention to the difficulty of organizing (and understanding) the efforts of the members of this group, even when they are in close proximity of each other. These difficulties do not only translate in a lack of understanding on how the creative class affects its host community, but do not truly explain what a creative class is beyond defining it as an above average geographical concentration of certain kind of individuals. As mentioned on the opening of this chapter, my ethnographic work suggested that the local organizing of artists and artisans seemed to develop a network of relationships based on common interests and shared goals. This network, the ethnographic work implies, is intertwined with members of the local community and serves as the tool for the artists and artisans to exert its influence and promote local changes suggesting the presence of a local creative class. Yet, I needed to map the local social structure to explore the organizing processes taking place (or not) among artists and artisan and between them and other members of the community to have a better understanding of what the local creative class was (or was not).

Using a social network methodology in this chapter I further explored the artists and artisans' local network and its standing in the community. As such I documented why and how artists and artisans related to each other and to other members of their community. I paid attention to individual's networks resulting from multiple instances of one-to-one relationships and the town's network fueled from those processes. Finally I explored the reach of the network of processes linking the community and assessed the consequences of the intertwining of artists and artisans in the local everyday life of the town. This knowledge was core to frame an answer the research question of this project; ***How do local organizing processes structure geographically bound and delimited creative class clusters?***

My search for answers took me through three levels of analysis; micro, meso and macro. At the micro level I paid attention to how one-to-one relationships are born and sustain, and how multiple instances of this relationships may developed into the town's network of artists and artisans. At the meso level I further my understandings of the one-to-one relationships of artists and artisans around town and learned how their actions are not limited to other artists and artisans but extend to all constituencies in town. This knowledge opened a venue to understand how artists and artisans may play a role crafting their community by serving as local glue. Finally, at the macro level I took the research lens one step up to get a sense of big picture and to explore the processes that made relevant artists and artisans in their community –and by doing so getting a general sense of how these organizing processes may structure a geographically bound and delimited creative class clusters.

How do artists and artisans establish and maintain relationships? The analysis at the micro level used a questionnaire and data from the ethnographic work. With this information I delved into why and how artists and artisans develop and sustain personal relationships in town. Social and emotional affinity were the answers. Yet they were not the only answers. Ethnographic work suggested that intrinsic trust, perceived proximity and homophily framed the documented social and emotional affinity.

First impressions count only to break the ice; after that you need to probe yourself worthy. Long term relationship among artists and artisans took place only with those who are perceived as similar, geographically close and are intrinsically trustworthy. In Easthampton the population is in general very homogeneous; white American. Differences are mostly occupational. As a local artist or artisan, as I discussed in the ethnographic work, distinctions exist in the context of quality of work (professional vs. amateur), artistic education (born vs. trained) and art domain (e.g., photography, sculpture, bookbinding). Hence, even when traditional accounts may see them as uniform group they are not so. Through their own eyes they are differences among them and as such they hold selective relationships with each other. Yet, at a larger level artists and artisans, as a group, "know" themselves different from the rest of the community and often times make conscious efforts to enact themselves as part of it.

Another interesting point that came through this analysis is that similarities among artists and artisans are not only driven by issues related to arts and crafts but are determined by levels of personal engagement within the network. This last was as well related to age and gender. The gender is relevant since women, in this community, are more likely to be personally engaged and vested in the processes than men. Women were

connectors of the network while men were more likely to be advisors or stay on the periphery. At large men, while present, are not that widely and/or deeply engaged as women. The local arts and crafts community is mostly a sisterhood.

Age was relevant as older members of this community are more likely to be seen as trustworthy and knowledgeable than their younger neighbors. It takes time to probe yourself and to become acknowledge for your merits. Trust is earned over the years through multiple interactions. Reputations are earned over time –whether good or bad. To be trustworthy was an indicator of quality and a personal disposition to work with others for the collective good. As such not all the long standing members of the community were deemed as equally wise or trustworthy in all domains.

As noted in the earlier ethnographic work to be perceived as local is relevant. Not having a sense of proximity; not expecting to see someone on regular basis around the spaces that were frequented as part of the daily life, was understood as not being close and as such grounds for dismissal. To be the next door neighbor was not enough in this community. You needed to be perceived as to be there and to be engaged. To be available to help and to work with others on common tasks, rather than geographical distance are the measures used by the artists and artisans to evaluate who is "close." Locality, in this town, often times was framed by engagement and availability rather than by having a local address. This reflected my own experiences when offered the opportunity to be part of the cultural council; I was there and I was engaged. I was local.

All these issues of similarity (homophily) affinity (social and emotional) and closeness (propinquity) meant that the camaraderie that fueled the one-to-one relationships across town, held relationships together within buildings, and is widely

praised in the artist and artisans' community as vein of creative support is "kinship of spirit" among individuals that perceived each other as similar, geographically close and see each other on regular basis. This understanding on how and why artists and artisans related to each other was the first part of the puzzle to answer the research question. The issues raised suggest that artists and artisans are more likely to relate to other artists and artisans not only because they share interests but because they find each other in close proximity on regular basis. In all, this frames the idea that artists and artisans may belong to the same network of arts and crafts.

Documenting the relationships of multiple individuals over the same space of time suggested that relationships overlapped and were content dependant. This is, artists and artisans in town were part of a local network and their relationships within the network were neither indiscriminate nor uniform –as I had already discussed. Individuals did not use the members of the network for the same reasons or with the same intensity. The power and nature of relationships, the analysis suggested, is tempered by the type of problem at hand, the affinity to other members of the network, and the perceived propinquity to those persons.

Knowing that artists and artisans related to each other as well as to other members of the community brings the next question. What is the role of artists in twon?

Are artists and artisans a "social glue"? The short answer, for this town and at this time, is yes. However this answer does not come as simple as it may sound. Given the choice artists and artisans are more likely to befriend other artists and artisans than non-artists and non-artisans and vice versa. Yet artists purposely do not limit their

relationships to peers. Among all constituencies in town, artists and artisans are the most likely to seek out and engage members of other groups.

Art related activities around town have evolved to bring together multiple constituencies on regular basis making them perceived each other as proximate. The underlying common goal of those activities serves to emphasize issues of affinity among members of the town. Likewise the required collaboration to make these events happen such as using private spaces for public performances serve to enhance trust in the community at large. As shown in the ethnographic work artists and artisans seek out on regular basis other constituencies blurring the boundaries of the arts and crafts community. As I described in the case of the young lady from Riverside Industries and in the case of Tony, arts and crafts are not domains secluded from the everyday life. Local artists and artisans, as discussed in the case of the Windows Project and the Art Walk, make efforts to make it part of the local normality. Making the artistic endeavors a common task enhances the affinity across the community by bringing common goals and shared interests.

But, how does the creative class influences its host community and makes a difference? The macro-level analysis in this project addressed this issue. To this end I paid attention to consequences of the artists and artisans' organizing. To do so I explore the town's network of organizations. This other analysis paid attention to the organizing processes as signaled by the actions of the members of the organizations. While the analyses focus on networks of individual documents individual-to-individual relationships, as earlier described, this analysis focus on organization-to-organization relationships maps the local organizing processes.

To locate the organizing actions of artists and artisans and inform the organization-to-organization analysis I evaluated their activities within each organization and assigned the organization to one of 17 domains. Since these are processual analyses of the town, I documented both social and economic relationships of the artists and artisans. This evaluation had the form of a coding where the goals and activities of all organizations were assessed mapped as local processes in the context of the community's everyday life. The resulting mapping was consistent with the ethnographic work as it showed the town as a place where arts were central, manufacturing was in its way out and physical presence of the community (such as households) were key. Likewise advocacy groups and disability services were identified as moving towards the center of the community processes as the ethnographic work had already suggested. Not only the presence of Riverside Industries as well as many healing art centers and advocacy groups in town have served to fuel this movement, but the involvement of artists and artisans with these organizations have served as well. Arts and crafts related fundraising supporting these groups, the creating of Riverside Arts, and One Cottage Street hosting arts and crafts while serving the local community with disabilities have been a both a drive and an exemplar of the acceptance and increasing centrality of this domain.

More important yet was the positioned of governance that showed a larger centrality than government. In this community the government mostly focuses on administrative services while issues of governance are mostly undertaken by grassroots activities and collective efforts including multiple constituencies. This last issue, the relationships between government, governance and community, along with the central role of the local arts points to a partial answer to the research question; the relevance of

the arts in the community comes from its ability to influence the local governance. This explains how artists and artisans achieve change in the community yet it does not describe the nature of the change; whether if it is positive or negative for the community at large.

Artists and artisans further analysis confirmed the ethnographic work suggesting that the way that they introduce change in the community is through social activism and political involvement. Issues of affinity and homophily mobilize them as a single force while trust ensure the long term standing of the activities as it encourages self-started acts that are often supported by other members of the network. Likewise, locality and proximity inform the nature of the actions and the direction of the changes from the perspective of the artists and artisans. This last point often times brings up contested actions and disruptions in the life of the community. Not everyone may share the same views in town.

In short, ***How do local organizing processes structure geographically bound and delimited creative class clusters?*** May be answered as follows;

The group-like nature of creative individual activities and lifestyle choices I suggest generates patterns of interaction, daily behaviors, and belief systems that may be particularly well suited for the social contagion of creativity and innovation –the seeds for the sought after local effect. For this to happen, structurally, the group demands certain micro-behavior of its members (e.g., propinquity, trust, homophily and affinity) that may de facto increase a member's exposure to potentially creative situations where their actions may affect the community at large. Whether the local creative class structure is a large cohesive component or a series of interlinked small cohesive pockets

around the community, a large degree of cohesiveness may be required for the creative class to be effective.

But, does the creative class bring a positive change for the community? While I have shown that there is a network or artists and artisans that interweaves with the community and that the artists and artisans activities and interests serve to bond and bind the community, the ultimate question about the positive value of the creative class is still open. While this project explores a community where the changes and influences have been so far positive, I have only been able to consider them so as I write this document with a retrospective lenses. As I was in the field I was able to document the processes and to explore the actions of the local artists and artisans yet I could not foresee the reach and consequences of those actions as they were unfolding on real time in front of my eyes. I will discuss more about this in the next chapter as I talk about two different tales of crafting the creative class.

CHAPTER 5

COMMUNITY CONSEQUENCES: ONE TOWN TWO TALES

The central argument in the extant literature introduces the creative class as a monolithic phenomenon that is either present or not (Florida, 2002a), and if present it should be mobilized toward positive socioeconomic change. No account is given to processual relationships between artists as individuals and to their communities in their grassroots activities. In particular, there has been no attention to how likely members of a plausible creative class may relate to each other and organize in such way as to eventually become acknowledged as a local creative class and then to follow their community effects over time.

Furthermore, issues of conflict and competing interests between "creative" individuals and across groups of individuals and their communities have largely been ignored. Attention to these concerns can help to explore the organizing processes by which a group of creative individuals, such as artists, may become engaged in relationships with each other in such a way that a creative class may eventually emerge and contribute (or not) to local socioeconomic change.

To that effect, the following two stories –tied longitudinally through information already included in the previous chapters– show different angles of some particulars with which the reader is already familiar. They demonstrate how complicated, and even misleading, it may be to expect a categorical a priori understanding about these issues. The "creative class" may be more contingent and precarious than extant literature may

lead us to believe, yet who is "the creative class" anyway? Things may end up being different than what they may appear to be at first, but we would never be sure unless we let them unfold over time… and perhaps not even then.

Tale 1: ArtsEasthampton: Coming Together to Fall Apart

Artists and artisans at One Cottage Street had been having Open Studio sales for several years and soon developed a reputation around town based on their accomplishments attracting customers and getting media attention at these events. Other artists and artisans in town started to schedule their Open Studio sales to match the One Cottage Street calendar and to borrow on their efforts. Among those matching their sales to One Cottage Street were the residents at Eastworks.

Eastworks events started as small studio sales yet little by little grew into arts and crafts fairs in the first floor lobby complemented by simultaneous Open Studio events throughout the building. Exhibit opportunities at Eastworks were opened to all artists and artisans regardless of their zip code as long as they had reserved a space in advance and paid their booth fees to the building managers. This contrasted with the organic approach at One Cottage, where non-tenants were only accepted as members of the event as long as someone in the building would vouch for him or her. Once again, even when the goal was apparently the same, the spirit and approach to organizing of artists and artisans at One Cottage and Eastworks shaped the actions of each clique making them two different phenomena.

Over the years, as their constituencies planned the events an amicable competition to attract customers and get attention made duplicated efforts in marketing and advertising a common occurrence across the two buildings. Finally, in 2004 people from

Eastworks and One Cottage came together with the intention of coordinating the Open Studios sales related actions at both communities. What started as informal conversations among geographically proximate peers, soon became a formal exchange among representatives of two cliques (or sub-networks) defined by their respective domains of interest and organizing approaches. The overarching idea was to find a way to optimize the efforts to reach the maximum amount of people in preparation for the semiannual sales. The shared philosophy was simple; to make of Easthampton an arts and crafts destination for holiday shopping. Yet the devil is in the details, and there were plenty of details in this project.

Once the idea of an official organization coordinating everyone's efforts was accepted, the process of enacting it became the shared task at hand. It was agreed by all participants that they would become the representatives of their respective buildings and as such they would be the liaisons between the people at their location and the new organizing committee. Once everyone accepted the corresponding role of liaison-spokesperson the first set of goals of this organizing became to define the name of the organization, its purpose, its membership rules, and its governing board structure. The "professional" approach to this project was strongly influenced by the driving force of the Eastworks group that was, oftentimes, the dominant voice in the conversations, mostly represented by one of its members; a professional graphic designer, who was key in advancing this partnership between buildings and events.

Choosing the name was simple. As the project involved sales of art and crafts in Easthampton, the suggested name by the Eastworks constituency: ArtsEasthampton, was

overwhelmingly accepted by the One Cottage Street representatives and the independent artists that sought to join the organizing efforts.

The purpose of the new organization, as agreed by all, was to represent the constituency of One Cottage Street and Eastworks and to act with their best interest at heart. This collaboration was limited to only two events, Open Studios and Holiday Sale. This boundary was purposely set by both groups to free them to pursue other activities on their own and to not overwhelm the committee, made of volunteers, with too many events.

The membership at the new organization was defined as: the constituency within One Cottage Street and Eastworks that were willing to participate in these two events. Additionally, it was agreed that if any independent artist from around town wanted to be involved he or she would need to be sponsored (i.e., "adopted") by one of the two constituencies. No freelancers were accepted. The power would be equally distributed between the two groups.

In accordance with the membership rules, a governing board was formed with a total of 12 individuals coming from the two constituencies –6 from each group. The members of the board represented the participating tenants at both buildings. Hence membership at the buildings, and acceptance by the rest of their clique, became a requirement. Additionally, emphasis was given to "active participation" and freeloaders were not tolerated. In all, ArtsEasthampton was not set as a hired marketing service where a fee would get you in the event but as a way to coordinate efforts among two vested and independent arts and artisans communities.

While the goal of the organization was mainly to coordinate efforts, money was needed to pay for media advertising and materials for posters, banners, and fliers. Hence, a membership fee was voted and accepted. This brought up the issue of the responsibilities for handling the money. To take care of the fees an independent bank account for ArtsEasthampton, different from the one held by One Cottage Street or the one used by Eastworks, was established. This financial arrangement served to put emphasis on the independent nature of the three groups and the task specificity of their organizing arrangements.

Through these processes the interests and personalities of the participants became stronger as the time elapsed. Likewise the working identities and goals of each clique started to interfere with each other and foster conflicts in the conversations. The first year activities became "almost" uneventfully. Marketing expertise at Eastworks became the driving force restricting decision-making to the hands of a couple of individuals within that group. This situation contributed to eventually putting aside the pursuit of consensus with the One Cottage Street constituency. "*I am the expert; I know how to do it. Move away!*" –was how their peers at One Cottage Street would later describe the Eastworks constituency's attitudes. In contrast, the Eastworks group felt that the load of work was on them and that the One Cottage Street artists and artisans were there, more often than not, just for the ride. "*We are doing all the work and they are just watching on the sidelines!*" –was the shared impression at Eastworks about the One Cottage people's participation. Examples of these dynamics were the name creation, logo design, banners crafting, media management, and press releases; all of them were mostly done by people at Eastworks.

At this point, in July 2005, I had been present at some of their meetings, had read their minutes from the beginning and talk to some of the members of the organizations, and from my perspective as outside observer two main issues became evident. The first one was the different cultures and organizing approaches within each community that came across and interfered with each other as the individuals sought to coordinate efforts. The second one, and perhaps more relevant, was that one-to-one understandings that brought both cliques together in pursuit of common goals "did not survive" the forced propinquity of both collectives. Monolithic perceptions based on enactments of personal and professional identity (i.e., "they" are local artists and artisans like "us", thus we have the same goals) crumbled while searching for a third way of organizing. In other words, while personal relationships born from propinquity and affinity brought both groups together those similarities were erroneously extended to everyone (transitivity) based on shared stereotypes that did not hold true (i.e., the friend of my friend is not my friend) when both groups went through the organizing processes.

The idea that, since everyone is an artist we can work together, overshadowed the reality of the individual level attributes shaping the dyadic relationships that built the organizing network. Just after a year of collaborations, as the group prepared for the 2005 Winter Sales Event, tensions were already growing. Despite of the economic success of the previous organizing, the constituencies of artists and artisans at each one of the buildings were no longer truly comfortable with the collaboration. The tension between groups built up and came to its full expression at a planning meeting that many years later was still present in the mind of the participants and framed their relationships around town. Accounts of that meeting spoke of shouting matches and fingers pointing.

Ownership of the idea of collaboration took center stage rather than considerations about enacting the collaboration itself. Old memories of abuse and free loaders were remembered. The symbols of creativity and identity; the name of the organization and the logos of the event, were contested and withdrawn from the public domain by those who created and owned them. Awareness of the unique organizing culture within each community took place in a discussion of whose way was the right way to do things. The value of weak links was lost as transitivity was found to never truly have been there. Attempts to mediate across cliques by the moderators of the group fell on deaf ears. Brewing ideas of having three logos; one for each building, in addition to the "unity" logo became contested and rejected. Structural holes that once helped the group to come together became entrenchments of separation. At the end of the session the only thing that remained standing was the idea that each community would do its own event in isolation from the others, and if the dates happened to match, let it be! Nobody could prove ownership of the calendar.

The opportunity to bring everyone together to collaborate was gone in the midst of sour feelings… or was it?

The ethnographic work narrated conflict and discussions. It exposed the tensions that set apart the two groups within the community. Yet the social networks analysis suggested the unfolding of a local organizing. The temporary emergence of ArtsEasthampton was only a moment in the local socioeconomic landscape that was still unfolding and changing. Individuals were still members of the same organizations around town and were still meeting at the same venues that they did before they chose to enact ArtsEasthampton. The organizing processes within each building and across

buildings were only a moment in time, an occurrence of a larger organizing process already unfolding in the community.

The social network analysis confirmed the opening of local artists and artisans to the community. Ego network and statistical analysis emphasized the choice of artists to befriend other artists and confirmed their relationships to other non-artists or artisans, as well. As the analysis suggested, the choice of the relationships was not only based on the affinity among the parties involved, but on their personal interests and accounts. This was confirmed by the ethnographic work that recorded mixed groups of attendance at town events where multiple interests were present, such as at the Master Plan Meetings.

The birth and death of ArtsEasthampton was just a moment in the unfolding of the local processes. Networks around town were still bridging the community and the personal interests that fueled this first attempt of unity were still present.

Tale 2: The Bear Fest: Artists and their Community Organizing Their Own Creative Class

Ethnographic observations and social network analysis suggested that artists and artisans were more likely to relate to other artists in the context of the community's everyday life. Yet, the same work suggested that artists, as a local clique, were not isolated from the community at large. They were related to other people in town, as they shared activities and interests, as it was evidenced by their shared membership and joint attendance at local meetings and events. Likewise, the analysis revealed that artists, who in the past often chose to remain invisible, have recently changed that position as have been organizing themselves in the context of the town's activities. Therefore, the question that remains open is, "*is their organizing valuable for the community?*"

The participant ethnography allowed me to observe how the members of the arts and crafts community selectively positioned themselves across organizations in town. Yet this was not an organized effort across the group. It was a self-selecting process that reflected personal interests and lifestyle choices. Relationships were based on personal affinity and homophily between proximate individuals. These mechanisms, as shown in the social network analyses, informed artists and artisans choices of organizational participation. Artists were self-selecting themselves, by trial and error across advocate groups, civic organizations, civic governance, and retail organizations.

Strong relationships between the arts and advocate groups, civic organizations, and civic governance, most of them grassroots based, explained the empirical assumptions about the causal link between the artists and artisans, and the local socioeconomic change. Independently from the ArtsEasthampton (and evidenced by it) the local community of arts and crafts had links to each other as shown in the ego network analysis and later supported by the meso-level work. The cohesiveness in the local arts dynamics suggested that an exchange of ideas and resources that strengthen the importance of the local arts exists. In all, it signals the value of the creative class not only as economic (or economic driven), but also social, as the actions of the members of this group shaped their organizing and the unfolding of processes within the town at large.

Local relationships between business owners and artists and artisans were documented through field work as the artists and artisans used the local businesses to exhibit and sell their products first as part of the annual Windows Project and later in the context of the monthly Art Walks. These relationships served, over time, to develop a local network that bridged across all constituencies. While contestation and conflict

disrupted the ArtsEasthampton organizing, this failure did not dissipate the local unfolding of the arts and crafts within the community. Artists and artisans were already impacting their community even when their effects were not always visible, and never controllable –not even by them. The Open Studio sales, as a synchronized event across constituencies, were happening before the ArtsEasthampton unfolded as its control mechanism, and still kept happening after the disruption brought by its termination. The organizing processes of the local artists and artisans just changed over time. They were relevant before and they kept being relevant afterwards as they were still part of the community.

The same processes that started ArtsEasthampton were working at other venues and under other shapes across town. A casual suggestion at one of the ArtsEasthampton meetings to seek a grant to develop a website to register all the members of the local arts and crafts community eventually took a life of its own. This idea soon involved people from outside of the ArtsEasthampton group. As it attracted new and additional constituencies, it reshaped itself and became an independent organization on its own right: the already described Easthampton City Arts (ECA) was in fact a spinoff from ArtsEasthampton.

This new unfolding sought to create an inventory of local talent and creativity to improve economic opportunities for artists and cultural establishments, as well as to offer a way for all art related events in town to be broadcasted back to the community –a larger scope than originally planned. The new organizing moved beyond the task specificity and boundaries of ArtsEasthampton as it worked with people beyond the three local arts buildings (at this point, April of 2005, tenants at Paragon had joined the processes started

by Eastworks and One Cottage Street). The new ECA group sought to bring a united local identity where "local" meant the town at large rather than just one of the local buildings. The new organizing worked with the planning office, the Cultural Council and other local constituencies to craft the new goals and, in the process, to develop new local ways of organizing the town. As its first major public milestone it launched, on November 2006, the Easthampton City Arts Member Directory. The event took place at a local restaurant; The Apollo Grill located inside of Eastworks building. The occasion was attended not only by artists and artisans from all three buildings but by many other members of the local community including the Major and other public officials. It is from these events that the Bear Fest was eventually crafted.

As this was unfolding the Cultural Council, on November of 2007, after many years of only having a mailing address, managed to get some office space and was holding its monthly meetings at its new location. The attainment of the new place was significant for three main reasons. First the new location was at the Old Town Hall building which was, by this time, recently redesigned as the town's art space as part of the town's efforts to make arts more visible in town. Secondly, the use of this space was the result of some of the Cultural Council members holding cross memberships with the Easthampton City Arts, as well as the promoter of the Town Hall venture being the owner of the Paragon Arts Building development. Finally, and most important, the new office space was shared with Easthampton City Arts –which later became the platform for the Bear Fest.

The idea of a town wide, one of a kind event to attract attention and put "*Easthampton on the map*" –as it was first expressed at the Cultural Council meeting by

one of its members– was presented to the community couple of years later as the 2009 Bear Fest (http://easthamptonbearfest.com). Seeded in a casual conversation at one of the Easthampton Cultural Council meetings in 2007, it became a joint effort between the ECC and ECA. The members of the council, acting as the weak links in the community, were bringing ideas together and feeding conversations. As the result of these processes the idea of a local festival, based on the San Francisco's Cow Parade initiative was advanced. The streets of San Francisco (www.cowparade.com/) were adorned with dozens of fiberglass cows all decorated by, in its majority, local artists. This idea eventually extended to other cities, including Chicago and, around this time in 2007, West Hartford Connecticut –a city 20 minutes away from Easthampton. Yet, what would the symbol of the Easthampton "parade"? At first, the plan was to fabricate ornate fiberglass buttons. Big buttons could be used as tables, sidewalk ornaments, or wall hangings.

At the core of this idea was the lingering memory of the town's industrial past and the moment when it was a flourishing community referred to as "Button Town." The desire to bridge the prosperous manufacturing past with a desirable future as an arts community and put a tangible representation of the artists and artisans occupancy of the former mill buildings inspired the buttons initiative. Yet, the buttons suggestion soon died out as the "artistic merit", "dimensional value and visual impact of a flat sculpture" were questioned by artists and artisans at the council and beyond. Soon conversations shifted from "who we were in the past" and what could represent our "history" into "who we are today" and "what speaks of our interests." The idea had spread throughout the community and these critiques were coming from local artists non present at the council

yet talking to council members and ECA members –as well– on a regular basis. The Cultural Council and the ECA which shared interests and goals were now sharing the office space since November 2007 and as a consequence they were growing closer. The festival's proposal had been, informally but largely accepted and the local conversations were direct to the format of its execution and its meaning.

A squirrel, a deer, dr. Zeus, a horse, and the local mountain, Mt. Tom, were just some of the many ideas that were discussed as the models for the fiberglass sculpture. Yet bears were the winners as the concept of local lifestyles came to the table and the presence of bears in the Valley was brought up "*do we have that many bears?*" was asked at one meeting at the council. "*Yes we do. I have seen them all the time*" –was the answer. Bears became the symbol of the community –at least for that year. But how would the Easthampton bear look like? The answer came from a local artist, Amy Davis, which donated her talent and time to make a tangible reality of the Easthampton's bear. Likewise others were contributing and volunteering to make this happen as they were already taking ownership of the processes.

Picture 23: Original Life size Baby bear before Decorations Stored at Eastworks

These conversations did not happen in isolation. The selection of a symbol to represent the community was happening at multiple places at the same time all throughout town. The two more relevant spaces were the Cultural Council and Easthampton City Arts. Yet, they were soon to become secondary as the event took a life of its own and the Bear Festival Committee was formed on 2008.

This new unfolding of the community, borrowed from prior processes crafting the town's organizing, and re-shaped those processes once again, Members of the Cultural Council and the Easthampton City Arts were not the only members of the group. Independent artists, business around town, teachers from the local school system and members of the local government joined the efforts. The idea became a fund raising campaign to support the local arts inasmuch as it was an opportunity to bring the community together, or a tool to teach local kids arts and science, or the chance for local

business to get their name out and become accepted as community caretakers. It seemed as if every constituency of the town had developed its own reasons to participate. At the end all reasons worked together to evolve into a single process involving the whole community.

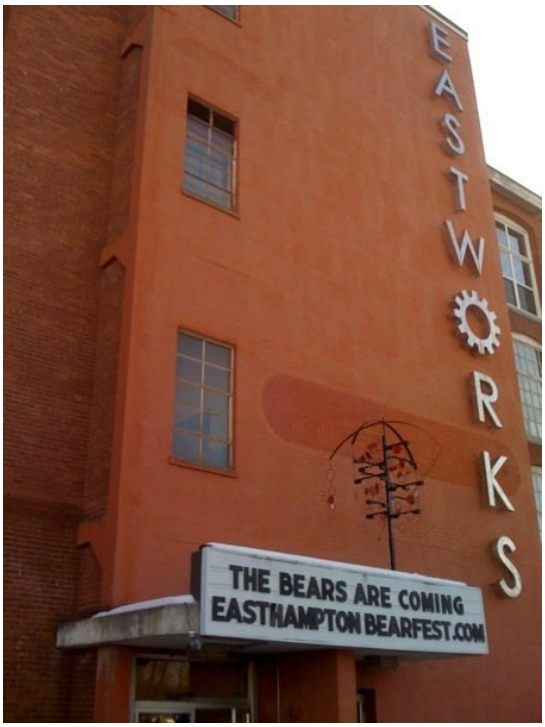
The project took time. Starting with the New Year, on January 5, 2008 a meeting was set to continue with the already ongoing preparations for the festival. Committees were already taking shape and a website was already up and running. Through the year multiple fund raising events would occur and local constituencies would pledge help with the organizing. Among the events was hold a trivia nigh organized by the ECA committee that not only served to collect funds but to advance the idea to a broader constituency in the community outside of the artists and artisans group.

About a year later, in December 2008, the Bear Fest committee had a plan work out for the event. Easthampton Bear Fest was to issue a call to artists to submit their designs for the bears. A jury of artists and members of the community would cure the selection process and the winners were to be paid $500 each for their work decorating a bear according to their submitted and approved proposal. This was different from other similar events where artists were asked to donate their work. Furthermore, at the end of the festival, the bears were to be started to be auctioned online while still on display on the streets to have the final bid coming at a dinner gala night. The proceeds for the event were to be split between the artists, Easthampton City Arts, and Easthampton public schools financially benefiting both the organizers and the community. Each artist would get 25% of his or her bear's proceeds. Art programs in Easthampton Public Schools and Riverside Industries each would get 20% of the proceeds, and the remaining 35% would

g back to Easthampton City Arts for future art programs. The unique proceeds distribution arrangements were a direct result of the presence of artists in the planning processes as well as members of the different constituencies.

On January 6, 2009 the committee released the Bear Fest call to local and regional artists and asked for the proposals to decorate the Easthampton bears. At the same time the fundraising efforts were intensify to pay for the "white canvas" bears so artists would have bears to decorate. The fundraising efforts had a fruitful end. At the conclusion of the campaign a total of 35 fiberglass sculptures; 20 life size bears and 15 life size cubs (or small bears); were ordered and paid for in full. The Bear Fest Committee taking advantage of its broad constituency and the extended network that it represented made arrangements for the "white canvas" bears to be delivered at Eastworks for safe keeping while waiting for the participant artists to pick them up to make them into their colorful sculptures.

Picture 24: Original Life size Bears before decorations Stored at Eastworks



Picture 25: Eastworks waiting for the Bears to arrive in 2009

By the submission's closing time on February 18 of the same year, 130 artists had presented their designs. On February 20, 2009, a couple of days after the closing of the call for proposals to decorate the bears, a "Welcome the Bears Kids Party!" took place at Eastworks where the bears were storage waiting for their unveiling and deliver to their corresponding artists. The well planed floor plan of the building and the easy access to it, along with the willingness of its administration to participate, made it the ideal place to store the recently arrived bears and to have the community welcoming event. By February 27, a jury selected and officially notified the 35 winners. On March 8, the pictures of the winners, along with the names of their proposals were posted on the festival's web site.

Picture 26: Sketch for The Bearon & The Bearon's Sculpture
Created by Jim Johnson.
Sponsored by Finck & Perras Insurance Agency, Inc.

Picture 27:Hiding Bear Sculpture
Created by Crystal Popko
Sponsored by Remax Real Estate, A.W. Borawski Real Estate, Valley Art Supplies, The Brass Cat, Rotary Club of Easthampton

To have the bears in house at Eastworks and have selected the proposals to decorate them was not the end point of this event. Before the bears were finally unveiled the production of events around the festival and the logistics of the festival itself still needed to be worked out. Following on the idea of public participation, the Bear Festival Committee put out another call to get proposals for art and cultural productions highlighting the festival. The idea behind this was to enhance the already scheduled activities that included Art Walks, and the weeklong festival in itself. The goal this time was to attract out-of-town tourists and encourage local residents to get involved in the celebrations.

Change is needed but it is only accepted when it comes in expected ways. Local officials and public discourse wanted arts to be seen on the streets to portray a vibrant town. Yet, not everyone was ready to assume the consequences or take a supporting role. While it looks like everyone was engaged in the process and the spirit of the community was being lifted by the preparations, not everything was that easy. Because the fiberglass bears may needed to be anchored on the sidewalk, the Bear Fest, after already launched, became at risk to be put on an indefinitely hold. A very devoted Department of Public Works, concerned with the possible structural damage to sidewalks if holes were drilled – along with concerns about having to install the bears as public art– took the case to town's Board of Public Works in April 19, 2009. While the case was being presented and discussed the local company that donated wooden logs to secure the bears intervened along with several other local citizens and proposed an arrangement so the bears, now

anchored to their logs, did not need to be fastened to sidewalks. The town's council allowed the already ongoing planning of the festival to proceed a week later.

Another hurdle to overcome appeared shortly after the bears were unveiled. On June 13 one of the bears; Chrome Bear, located in front of Eastworks was uprooted from its bolts and, as the locals would later said, "bear-napped." Chrome Bear became known as "bear-ly" there. Within hours a broad mobilization of the local community had already scouted the area in search of the bear. A FaceBook page was created and emails and press releases were distributed.

Picture 28: FaceBook Page for Chrome Bear (a.k.a. Bearly there) Bear-napped

While this was happening a second wave of concerns crossed the community a couple of days later as an attempt to take away in the middle of the nigh the small bear sitting across Eastworks was folded by vigilant neighbors that heard the perpetrators,

scared them away and kept watch over the bear while the local authorities arrived. As a result of these events the smaller bears were removed from all public displays and stored for safe keeping. What was meant to be an easy ride of community collaboration and public enjoyment was disturbed by acts of vandalism and ensued protective responses. Nevertheless, the community as a whole rose again and took agency. Local businesses, already used to work with local artists through the Windows Project and later the monthly Art Walks, offered windows spaces to put the small bears back on public display so the festivities could proceed. For those bears that could not be hosted at these windows, the business owners offered to kept them overnight in their stores and bring them back out to their public spot every day for the remaining of the festivities. The Chrome bear history did not have such a happy ending. The bear finally appeared on October 14, 2009 at the end of the events just in time to be included in the public auction of the bears the next day. However it was damaged beyond any reasonable repair. Somebody had made of it a character of a horror movie and had mutilated it beyond fix.

The Bear Festival Committee came together and secured a new fiberglass bear so the artist could recreate the piece and the auction had its original 35 bears. On October 15, 2009, at the end of the gala night the committee auctioned all bears for the total amount of $53,975. The auction, like the rest of the festivities was unique to this town. Started ahead of the gala night as a bid on line at the "Bidding for good website" (http://www.cmarket.com/auction/AuctionHome.action?documentId=90901913) the auction raised $21,017 several days ahead of the final event. By the end of the gala night the bears fetched nearly $60,000. The community had come together and made it happen.

Picture 29:"Bidding for good website" for Easthampton's Bear Fest

Yet the gala night with its food and cocktails that marked the end of the bear festival was not the end of the bears' story. Members of the community had fallen in love with the bears and had made collective bids to ensure that at least some of them would be kept in Easthampton. First by word of mouth and later via email and Face Book through a page named "Keep some BEARS in Easthampton!" (http://www.facebook.com/pages/Keep-some-BEARS-in-Easthampton/149575684292) different constituencies came together to bid for their favorite bears in an effort to keep them local. The bears were the image of their success and new identity as a community.

They were the flag of their renaissance and they needed them to stay to remind them that. At the end the community efforts served to keep several bears local. “Something Fishy,” the bear, was kept in the town with the help of a member of the local cultural council that spearheaded a grassroots effort that raise $2,000 to buy it. Likewise some local organizations bid and bought some of the bears to preserve them in the community. On November 20, 2009, the Northeast Center for Youth & Families in a public ceremony dedicated one of the bears, “Ursa Great Spirit”, to its permanent public display in town as a signal of their commitment to the local arts. The ceremony included the artists and the recently re-elected major. “Ginger Bear Man" found a home on top of freezer cabinets in Big E's Foodland –the local Supermarket. "Papa Bear & Baby Bear" can be seen at their new home in the Emily Williston Library, a gift from Easthampton Savings Bank, who was as well an strong sponsor of the festival. "Aloha Bear" joined the Riverside Industries family.

It may seem that the arts are now vibrant in the Easthampton community and the local artist and artisans together with the rest of the community may be described as the local creative class (See Figure 19). Yet, from my perspective the presence of a creative class –expressed here as a whole community organizing- and its consequences cannot be taken for granted. Just as ArtsEasthampton failed after its first year, the collaborative and creative spirit that has emerged from the Bear Fest may not be guaranteed over time. Nevertheless, even if the Bear Fest is now done the processes that supported it may not be gone and may be able to craft a different tale for this town –just as the Bear Fest was the long-term story of the evolution of ArtsEasthampton. What would that be? Only time would tell…

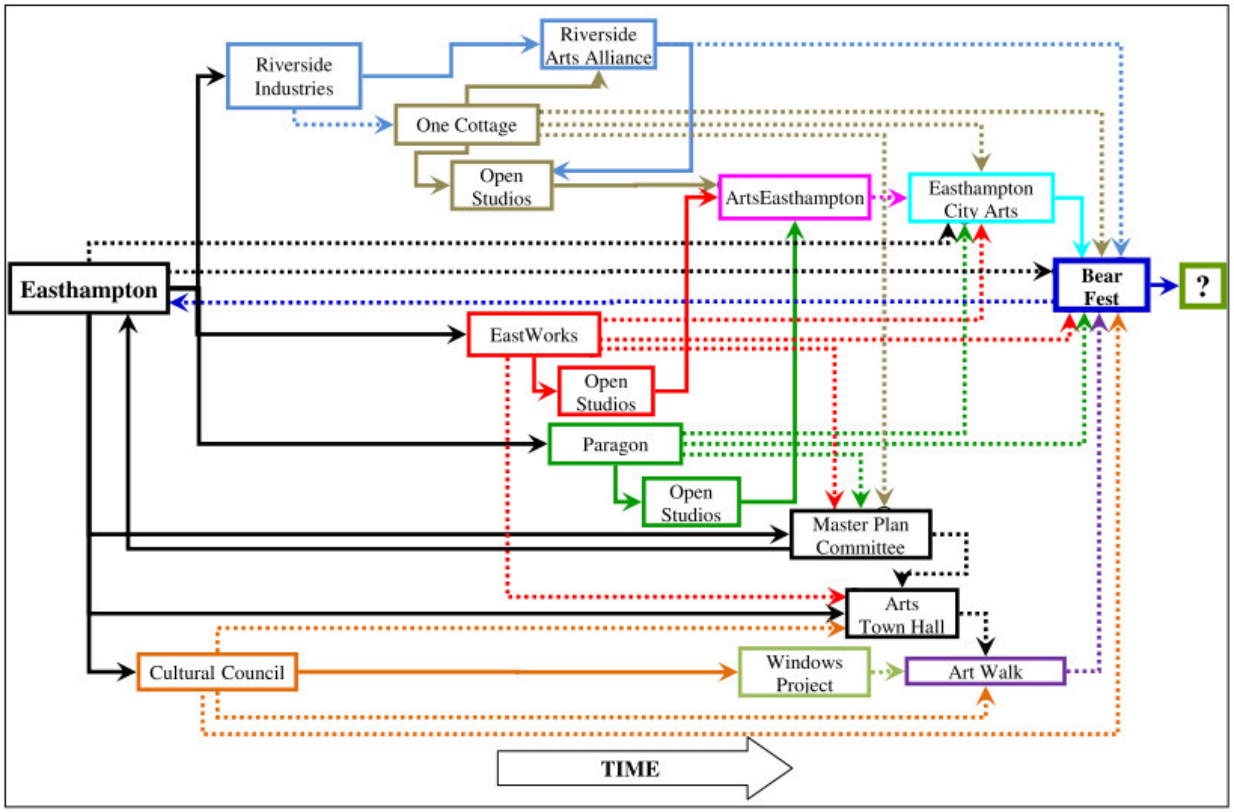


Figure 19: Schematic & Chronological Representation of Easthampton's Organizing

Time flows from left to right as noted by the arrow at the bottom. Solid arrows represent official and direct participation by the members of the 1st organization towards the 2nd. Doted arrows represent unofficial but specific participation by members of the 1st organization in the activities of the 2nd one. For example; members of Riverside Industries helped to establish One Cottage artists collective which in turn launched its own Open Studios events. Participants at the Open Studios events from One Cottage, Eastworks and Paragon came together and crafted the ArtsEashampton which indirectly helped the organizing of Easthampton City Arts . Finally Easthampton City Arts directly crafted the Bear Fest but only did it as it indirectly supported by most of the arts and crafts groups around town.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND REFLECTIONS

Through this work, I illustrate and discuss organizing processes that were undertaken by a community of artists and artisans living and working in a small town in Western New England. The processes, as I demonstrated through the use of participant ethnography and social network analysis, are part of the everyday life of the community. As such, they modify and are modified by local events. These processes involve personal relationships and preferences, which may be carried as a snowball effect that transmit ideas and engage affine people to work together towards common goals without an official structure to control the common effort.

The extant literature has focused on the descriptive account of what is expected from a local creative class (Florida, 2002a). The description is a series of socioeconomic indexes that, it is argued, evidence the local presence of the creative class (Florida, 2002a). More recently the creative class has been studied as the geographical distribution of "cultural services consumption" within urban settings (Lorenzen & Andersen, 2009). The core of these arguments speaks of large percentages of people "officially" performing certain art and culture related activities. The indexes report socioeconomic surveys where activities are presented based on their economic value. The geographical distribution of "cultural services consumption" evaluates the spatial distribution of culture-related activities regardless of their economic value. Using either of these two premises as benchmarks, an exploratory inspection of this community would have deterred any future work in the area of the creative class. Local records revealed that

only 152 artists, artisans, and people involved in the arts and culture existed. Besides artists and artisans this number also includes music professors, wedding photographers, and assistant printers. At the beginning of the study the officially reported cultural activities in town were no different from any other small town in this geographical area; the local summer concert (mostly attended by seniors and young families), the local arts and crafts sale (a once a year event targeting non-locals), some local theater and the presence of a local park. The local cinema had closed many years back, there were no classical music recitals, the local library was more of a functional place to support the local school system than a leisure place, historical architecture was long forgotten and there were no local museums other than the sporadically open historical society.

The use of the US census database would not have helped much either as the size of the community (under 25,000 residents) is not large enough to be reported on its own. Detailed data reporting artists and artisans is only available at the county level. At the city level, data are reported in broader categories to ensure confidentiality of the respondents. Thus the US Census category that at the city level reports arts (578 people, or 5.8%, of the total town's population for 2000) includes not only artists and artisans but cooks, waitresses and waiters, as well as hotel services, and park and recreations staff. Additionally, the census data only reflect the occupations of people living in the city, thus, ignoring those who practice their occupation in the city but do not live there, such as most of the artists and artisans renting space at Easthampton's former mill buildings while living in other nearby communities.

In this context I followed and assessed, through archival work and participant ethnography, the presence of the artists and artisans in town. The starting data and

analyses were complemented with a social network analysis. While the original work offered insights on the actions of individuals and painted with broad strokes the big picture describing the actions of the community, the social network approach gave me tools to further understand and map those processes. Using a series of reiterative steps, the social network data was contextualized and explained by the participatory ethnographic work.

I mapped explored and explained, the daily life of Easthampton's artists and artisans and interactions between them and with others members of the town. I identified places where local artists and artisans congregated and engaged in the organizing processes. I found out about the organizing of the local arts and crafts community. I realized that it was their choice as single individuals not to be visible. Later, I learned that their new organizing choice was to become visible. In this context I saw them fight and break apart their organizing as they tried to collaborate to become a community with a single purpose bridging across buildings. Yet I eventually witnessed their success working towards a common community goal, larger than the goals of their initial failed collaborative efforts. Thus, this project shows how artists and artisans struggle to become a community of creative practice and how they become acknowledged as such by their neighbors as they notice their organizing which unfolds socioeconomic change. The processes leading to its sustained presence in this location are not independent or exogenous to the place. They are part of the local history, influenced by the shared ongoing socioeconomic process and dependent on locality. Thus, are they a creative class?

As part of this project, personal experiences, social networks and local tales were explored as they all are interrelated and contribute to the emergence of a local creative class. Accordingly, it was shown that the creative class is not a demographic occurrence to be recorded but a socioeconomic organizing of a group of individuals that have taken ownership of their community offering creative ideas to advance it. Understanding how a creative class social network becomes part of a community –and significant to it– helps to broaden our conceptions of what is an organization and how its processes reciprocally interact and co-construct its environment as it was originally suggested by Penrose (Fox, 1968).

Although I have already mentioned the importance and the reciprocal influence among personal experiences, the organizing of the artists and artisans, and the local social networks of the community, I did not emphasize the dominance of any of them but their interrelated expected and unexpected, effects. As such I argued that these processes are not linear or problem free. They run in every possible direction as ties in local networks, and as such are subject to power struggles and ideological battles. Furthermore, even in small localities such as Easthampton, members of the creative class are not homogeneous entities sharing a single network –as I have shown. Multiple interests and power struggles are intertwined, and only enacting balance between individual and communal interests can ensure the sustainability of a creative class network by guaranteeing its cohesiveness and reciprocity. Creativity is not only a professional exercise but a communal endeavor. Agglomerations of creative individuals do not constitute a creative class collective unless people are linked to each other while locally enacting creativity.

Implications and Contributions

This work was framed by the following research question: ***How do local organizing processes structure geographically bound and delimited creative class clusters?*** This question did not take for granted the creative class but questioned and explored the organizing practices of geographically agglomerated creative individuals. As such, I sought to bridge micro, meso, and macro levels of organizing with the use of a multi-methods approach. I paid attention to organizing among individuals, across organizations, between individuals and organizations, and finally I evaluated the unfolding of the community as the unfolding of a collective accomplishment. At the end I explored and offered an example of how local processes within a geographical agglomeration of individuals and organizations may become identified as a creative class, and addressed how those processes may unfold in unexpected directions and how they may become sustained or not.

To accomplish my goals I framed this research through a nexus between strategic management, economic geography and economic sociology. This unique theoretical framework gave me a new perspective to explore the local organizing of artists and artisans as the nascence of a creative class. It positioned the phenomenon as a location specific urban agglomeration shaping, and shaped by, local processes mapped as social networks. The strategic management lens served to explain how –and why– the processes born from multiple, but simultaneous, actions of a collection of individuals in pursuit of individual goals may foster a cluster of organizations as they compete and seek to survive (Hitt & Ireland, 1985; Porter, 1998c; Porter, 2000). Likewise economic sociology enriched my analysis as it framed the processes as socially embedded

unfolding phenomena (Granovetter, 1985; Putnam, 1995; Zukin & DiMaggio, 1990). Economic geography brought up the relevance of the uniqueness of location and the spatial distribution of local actors as they enacted the local organizing processes (Gibson & Kong, 2005; Yeung, 1998, 2005b). But, what was my contribution back to these fields, if any?

Strategic Management

An underlying premise in strategic management is the acknowledgement of uneven geographical distribution of resources. In other words, it is widely accepted that some places are better suited for business than others. As a result, scholars in strategic management have advanced, as a viable organizational strategy, to locate and to take advantage of munificence spaces to help the survival of the organization (Hitt & Ireland, 1985; Hoskisson *et al.*, 1999). This has fueled, and have been fueled by, arguments about the importance of the geographical agglomeration of business also known as clusters (Porter, 1980).

Inquires about an ideal environment have advanced that locations endowed with a creative class, as originally introduced by Marshall (1890), may hold the answer to business survival. At this places munificence means innovation (Baptista & Swann, 1998; Porter, 2000), entrepreneurship (Kuah, 2002; Lechner & Dowling, 1999), and knowledge spillovers (Baptista & Swann, 1998; Porter, 2000), as well as a good integration with the local community –as Marshall originally described it. Yet, while research in strategic management has kept its focus on finding and exploiting these locations it has not tried to understand the unfoldings that makes them possible in the first place.

Current perspective in strategy, as the recent work by Miles, Miles & Snow (2005), advances that firms' dynamics –and strategies– are embedded in a collaborative Multi-Firm Network shaped by the relationship between organizations and environment. It is in this context that this work opens the possibility to understand how these ideal locations come into place. Furthermore, it helps to explain how an organization born from these processes may, over time, be re-shaped by them so it continues to survive in the context of the local unfolding. As I had explored the local dynamics of the community I showed evidence of how the processes that make a location valuable are neither spontaneous nor permanent occurrences but time-evolving processes. Thus, my work suggests that strategic management needs to develop a new sense of planning as socially constructed environment-organization co-constructions so that community processes, such as those illustrated in this work, may be integrated in current understandings of organizations' dynamics.

Organization and its environment "are enacted through the social construction and interaction processes of organized actors" (Smircich & Stubbart, 1985:724). Hence, framing strategic management as the processual –and collective– enactment of the environment and the organization opens the door to explore strategy as the enacted integration of business as part of local processes. This option means to no longer set strategies to seek the best environments but to create the best environments.

Economic Sociology

The ability to secure resources is a socially embedded process that has value on its own independently from the resource itself. Furthermore, the actor's capacity to obtain the resource does not guarantee that the resource itself, even if attained, would assure a

positive outcome. . The same mechanisms that can serve to secure resources (i.e., social capital) can also lead to negative outcomes for others (Portes & Sensenbrenner, 1993) including excess claims on clique's members (Geertz, 1963), the exclusion of outsiders or segregation (Waldinger, 1995), restrictions on individual freedoms by peer pressure or group compliance (Waldinger, 1995), and the enactment of downward leveling norms (Portes & Landolt, 1996). These paradoxical, and somehow contradictory views on social capital, are exemplified in Florida and Putnam understandings of what is needed to foster an innovative and creative community.

To Florida (2004) weak ties are ideal cradles for creativity in a community. For him this means to have a community that is more open and receptive to newcomers and new ideas. For Putnam (1993) the opposite is true. He suggests that communities with strong ties (i.e., high social capital) foster creativity and innovation by facilitating the sharing of resources among the established constituency. His argument advocates that a community that is well settled and where everyone knows everyone else are better suited to be creative and have successful organizational environments.

This work advanced a third way born from Florida and Putnam arguments. In this work I suggest that to use the benefits of social capital, as a tool for regional development, you do not need a community dominated by weak ties or a community of mostly strong ties. Rather, this work proposed that a successful community has a moderate number of both strong and weak ties. The latter allows the community to be open to newcomers while strong ties provide the support to let the information, brought in by the newcomers, to be distributed over the community. Furthermore I acknowledged that community processes (whether intended or not) are social activities subject to spatial

conditions (Grabher, 2006; Granovetter & Swedberg, 1992) and time evolution. As such I considered these processes as reciprocally influenced by, and influencing, its location and other socioeconomic processes. I suggest that over time weak ties may become strong ties as individuals become socialized in the community while strong ties may become weak ties as social change and local migrations may remove or disperse local cliques.

In all, I advance that the organizing processes, born from the exchanges among individuals, need to be understood not only as socially embedded phenomena known as social networks (Granovetter, 1985, 1991; Granovetter & Swedberg, 1992) but that social networks must be understood as within their spatiality and time evolving conditions. Longitudinal work paying attention to individuals relationships in the context of the full network, I suggest, may serve to address Granovetter's (1998)concerns about the atomized analysis of economic sociology.

Economic Geography

Economic geography studies the location, uneven distribution and spatial organization of socioeconomic activities (Lorenzen & Andersen, 2009). This premise served to originally explain the creative class as a homogeneous collective of individuals sharing the same interests and preferences, and inhabiting a location invested with ideal attributes (e.g., Florida, 2002a, 2004). Works such as Markusen's (2005) have advanced a critique to this original perspective and have described the creative class as a discrete aggregate of occupational and regional variants. More recently Asheim & Hansen (2009), studying the locational preferences of the creative class have suggested that not

all members of the creative class may seek the same attributes when searching for a place to live.

This project builds on those critiques and advances the creative class as a discrete aggregate of occupational and regional variants of individuals subject to personal preferences driven by lifestyle choices. In particular I focused on the creative class as the outcome of local organizing processes of individuals distributed –based on personal preferences– across a geographically contiguous space. As such, I propose the creative class must be understood as a local –and localized– phenomenon comprised by a multiplicity of individuals with a variety of interests reflected in the enactment of their organizing and localized distribution.

In this context, this work contributes to economic geography by exploring new understandings of distributions of talents within and across cities. Conventional wisdom in public policy and economic geography have dictated for many years that people seek jobs, hence to promote regional growth organizations need to be attracted through fiscal or structural policies (Asheim & Hansen, 2009). Florida's (2002a) arguments on "the creative class" propose the opposite. His arguments suggest to create a people's climate rather that a business climate to foster regional development. While Florida's insights have offered a new and innovative understanding to spatial distribution they have not gone without critique. Recent works from Asheim & Hansen (2009) point out to the need to understand the creative class not as a monolithic and universal group, as described by Florida, but as a collection of sub-groups of individuals with different preferences when seeking where to (re)locate.

Building on Asheim & Hansen's (2009) argument, I explore the location preferences of the creative class members. However, I do not conceptualize the location preferences as predetermined by the knowledge base of individuals, nor I presume the locations to be immutable realities unaffected by the actions of their inhabitants. Furthermore, my epistemological perspective allows me to enrich this argument by accepting that individuals rather than choose to migrate may choose to re-invent their community. Finally, as I do not presume that the minimum or maximum size of a community determines which one may be a repository of a creative class. Thus, I extend the creative class argument to explore otherwise unobserved geographies.

Final Reflections

Is being an artist enough to be a member of the creative class? Is the performance of the arts enough to be part of the organizing of the local arts? Accounts of the creative class as an index of cultural economy, and knowledge-based descriptions of individual attainments in economic geography reaffirm the understanding that it is the practice of an art-related skill that grants creative class membership. However, this may not be true. As I discussed previously, in particular through the history of One Cottage Street, I noticed different transitional moments that eventually resulted in having a vibrant arts community, even when this was not the intention. The unintended consequences of the place where artist and artisans were located included the co-location and eventual unfolding of a center for disability and therapy services as part of a creative class. These casual and unexpected outcomes can thus also be described as part of the positive socioeconomic changes that has been consistently, and prescriptively cited in the extant

creative class literature (DeNatale & Wassall, 2006, 2007; Donegan *et al.*, 2008; Florida, 2002a; Gibson & Graham, 1992; Markusen, 2005; Markusen *et al.*, 2008; Moulaert, Demuynck, & Nussbaumer, 2004). But can these be replicated elsewhere?

Another take on this point was addressed when I presented the difference between local artists and commuting artists. The idea of a "local" was questioned, and thus it served to question the a need for a sense of ownership towards a community as part of the required attributes for membership in a local creative class. It was no surprise, and a good confirmation of the original intuitions fueling this work, that local people were more likely to find each other as they attended and participated in local organizations. However, the moderate interactions that local artists in Easthampton had with other members of the community while holding relatively strong links with other artists more generally, served to emphasize the presence of a processual network of artists and artisans that not only bridges artists within the city but beyond the city boundaries. This was clearly observed throughout the ethnographic work, when it was noted that local art events were largely populated by outside artists. This result was intriguing, and served to contrast the ideas of "local" artists versus "commuting" artists as part of a common creative class.

Finally, in the last chapter I presented two tales from the town. Through them I described how artists and artisans came together, fell apart, and then came together once again as part of organizing processes which eventually impacted the community at large. The most important elements of these tales came from feelings of déjà vu. Many of the protagonists would find themselves repeating their histories under new scenarios. Yet, upon a closer look, no history was truly alike. From a distance strife and dissent may

have looked the same, but the processes that sustained them were not. Hence these processes brought new nuances to local histories and made them, permanently, transitional states for the next event. Thus, this sequence of situations, I suggested, were not independent from each other. They were part of the same local organizing that was unfolding, and would continue to be unfolding over time throughout the community. What would be next?

A final reflection and self-encounter came along while writing this dissertation. As I entered the field I was a researcher trying to learn about the organizing of the creative class. My core argument proposed that the formation of a creative class was affected by its environment and vice versa, as they would co-construct each other. While theoretically, this idea made perfect sense, I did not "take it personally". While the ethnographic perspective made me aware of the effects of my presence on the field, I did not think much about the effects of fieldwork on me. Yet, the proverbial "Eureka" moment came as I was reviewing my notes on the art therapy group. My entrance into the field with that group required me to be one more in the classroom. Thus, in my first day I was offered paper and pastel colors. Before I realized it, my "inner child" was free again and I was drawing on the paper. It took me a couple of seconds to bring myself back into the researcher's role to "watch" me enjoy the colors. At that time I realized that one of the premises of being an artist is to be free to create and to explore without boundaries, enjoying the moment and learning from the experience. Perhaps that is the "other" creative class effect that becomes "contagious" as artists becoming part of their communities keep thinking "why not?" and move on to try something new.

Although my work in this project, theoretical and methodologically, may be completed, my exploration of the "why not" has just started. My future work has barely begun: looking into communities as large socioeconomic processes unfolding from their members and the organizing they enact in their daily life may bring new insights to older ideas about planned economic development. . Questioning the nature of these older assumptions can offer alternative views of the relationships between business and society. Why not? If you can think it, you can do it!

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

The town of Easthampton is located, in the heart of the Pioneer Valley Region in the Hampshire County in Western Massachusetts (see Figure 20). Although the Pioneer Valley, by geographic definition, originally consisted of the 43 cities and towns comprising only Hampden and Hampshire Counties additional economic factors have contributed to expand its coverage. The most relevant characteristics of this economic region are:

- Interstate Route 91 which is the Pioneer Valley's most significant agent of growth and change. Since its completion in 1970, I-91 has unified the region on a north-south axis; it is a focal point for economic activity and job growth; and provides a catalyst for the revitalization of the Valley's major urban centers.
- The 26 communities of Hampshire County are an integral part of the Pioneer Valley's regional economy and are intimately tied to the Valley's daily business and employment interactions.
- Bradley International Airport, located in Windsor Locks, Connecticut is an interstate transportation facility providing the bulk of the commercial/air service for Pioneer Valley residents. Along with the resources of the airport, thousands of Pioneer Valley workers commute daily to jobs in Hartford and northern Connecticut and vice versa.

Easthampton, with roughly 13.6 square miles of land area, is situated in a broad and relatively leveled valley bordered on the east by the steep slopes of Mount Tom. This position places it approximately 14 miles north of Springfield and 96 miles west of

Boston with two highway corridors, Routes 10 and 141, serving the access into town. Route 10 runs north-south, provides direct access to the east and connects Easthampton with I-91 S and the Massachusetts Turnpike. Route 141 runs as well, north-south connecting it with I-91 N towards the city of Holyoke. The intersection of roads makes of the town a crossing point for the US-Northeastern artisan community. See Figure 20 and Figure 21.

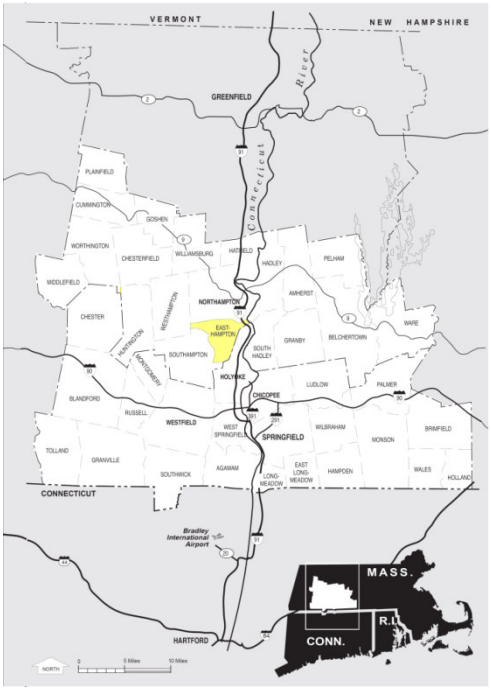


Figure 20: Pioneer Valley Region

Additionally, Easthampton geographical surroundings offer several opportunities for outdoors leisure and relaxation which are some of the reasons behind the arrival of the artisan community. The Nonotuck Park is one of the most relevant local recreational options. It is located in the heart of town containing 185 acres of outdoors activities including hiking, canoeing, picnic and swimming among others. The Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary, located at the town's outskirts, also provides an alluring recreational facility. This sanctuary offers five miles of trails running through forest, meadows, marshes, and

wetlands, as well as canoeing opportunities and a learning center. The Manhan River, currently part of a local outdoors development project, flows past the center of town feeding the Nashawannuck fishing pond and eventually reaching the Connecticut River. Additionally, the Norwottuck Rail Trail, part of the Connecticut River Greenway State Park and one of two paved rail trails within the Massachusetts State Forests and Parks System, has been scheduled to be extended to reach Easthampton. This bike path currently follows the former Boston and Maine Railroad right of way for ten miles through the towns of Amherst, Hadley, and Northampton. See Figure 21.

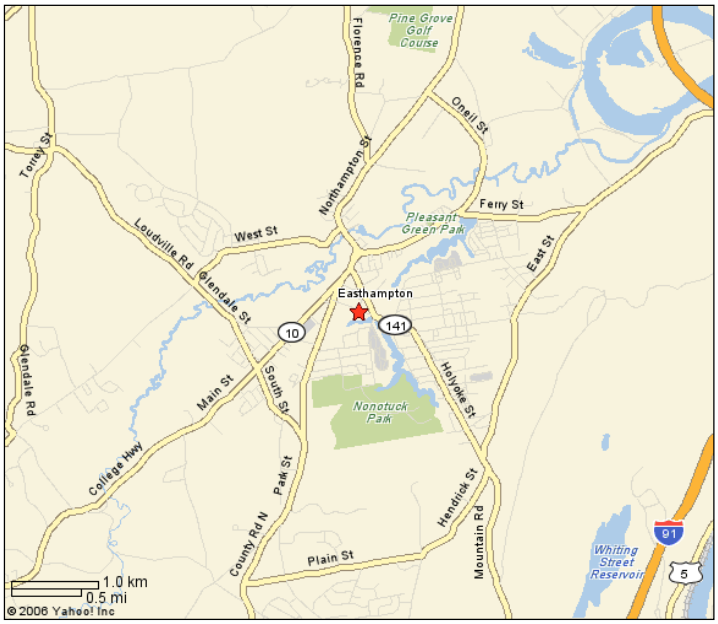


Figure 21: Town of Easthampton

In summary, Easthampton's geographical convenience because of its multiple access points (See Figure 21) and its unique location in the heart of the Western New England area (See Figure 20), plus its availability of resources makes the town an ideally suited location for this research.

APPENDIX B

WHAT THE DATA LOOK LIKE

In total, I completed about 600 hours of observation over the period from February 2005 to May 2009. The longest that I spent at one single event was a community planning event organized over a three-day weekend that began on Friday after lunch and ended on Sunday before supper. The shortest that I spent at an event or meeting was 45 minutes during a Cultural Council meeting. I usually spent 1 to 2 hours at each meeting, not including the time around town before and after the meeting. When participating in public events, such as the Art Walks or the Open Studio weekends, I spent between 5 and 8 consecutive hours talking to people, documenting and taking notes about what I saw, what I heard around me, and what people discussed with me.

Additional information came in the form of email exchanges between members of the organizations and email distribution lists (about 1,600 emails), official minutes from meetings (about 200 pages), Master Plan documentation (500 pages), face book exchanges and updates (20 friends –and counting), automatic web crawlers on news on Easthampton (about 2,500 hits), project questionnaires (63), and reports and original data from surveys distributed by Easthampton (2,300 surveys).

Data were predominately collected, but not limited to, the typical ethnographic techniques of fieldwork, whereby activities were observed and documented by note taking and audiotape recording. Pictures were included (Allan, 2005) as well as blogs and electronic communications. Field observations, on-the-spot conversations, informal interviews and semi-structured interviews made for most of my data. Yet, they were not the only sources, as the community of my concern used other means to asynchronically

communicate with each other when face-to-face exchanges were not possible. This was done mostly when the conversation included multiple parties and scheduling was problematic. Nevertheless, to be present at their meetings and observe their exchanges revealed opportunities to explore in greater depth.

Most of my interviews took the form of conversations or "talking with people" (DeVault & McCoy, 2002:756). They took place during field observations, when I was attending and documenting meetings and/or events. At some point during the observations, I might ask for complementary details –"*I'm not sure that I truly understand what you meant by that*"; I would say. As they knew that I was a foreigner and that I was there to research "the local relationships with the arts" they often volunteered information followed by thick descriptions to compensate for my perceived lack of knowledge into their doings. "*You know, here [in the US] people see art differently*" –I was told once talking with a local bookbinder. "*In Europe, and in Latin America too, I suppose*" –he added acknowledging my background and trying to draw a common ground while making a point about the differences– "*art is everyday life, here people do not think it, see it, like that. Here, for many, art is something pretty that you buy. They forget that there is art all around. Many people are like that here [in the US]*" –he concluded. This understanding of art in the US was a common trend in many conversations that I had with other local artists when talking about the efforts involved in being an artist in the US. They would try to convey the lack of understanding of the value of art in the US. For them art is creativity, is to look at things from a different –non orthodox– perspective. "*da Vinci was an artist*" –the same bookbinder said at another time– "*that is why he could do what he did*" –he concluded.

In all, this experience of knowledge sharing where people made efforts to bridge my evident lack of framework echoed the research field accounts and reflections of Rusell, a native from Lancashire, England with no experience as a professor or teacher, conducting participatory ethnography about pupil resistance in Australia (Miller & Rusell, 2005). For Russell, this served him to get more complete information of the local happenings. For me, this gap gave me the opportunity to account for thick descriptions of what it was like to be an artist in the US context. Likewise it allowed me to have interviews that were more of an informal or on-the-spot conversations, rather than formal or semi-formal interviews; they were mostly spontaneous in the situational everyday of the participants.

I used more conventional approaches to interview them as well. However, they were not as intense or frequent. At the beginning of the project, and at its end, I scheduled a series of interviews with several artists and artisans. My first interviews included people that I either learned about through membership rosters as I first stepped in the field or were suggested to me by people that I had met at my first meetings. My second round of interviews came at the end of the project and consisted of a different set of individuals, selected as a result of my knowledge of the field and a social map that I produced using social networks methodologies. This initial and final series were semi-structured interviews set to ask for clarifications of specific observations and other experiences, respectively.

During the field observations, I took pictures to frame what I had seen and to remind myself of a place and/or event. Images were part of the history as art and socioeconomic changes have visual components to them.

Picture 30: Local Artist / Graphic designer / Charrette Member during the Summer 2005 Open Studios Event

My notebook was a handy tool to make quick drawings with the layout of the places. It also served for note taking when the digital recorder was not an option, because of privacy concerns or surveillance issues.

During my drive back home, after some of the meetings, I would use the recorder at times to document my thoughts and impressions of the events. On other occasions, I walked or cruised the community with an open microphone, recording my thoughts and impressions as well as documenting the local sounds around the areas.

Preparing for the meetings and the field work became a routine in itself. Besides carrying my "research backpack" loaded with business cards, pens, extra batteries, a spare recorder, notebooks and my camera, I devoted time to re-read my notes. As the research progressed, I made a point to read the local news of the town daily to be up-to-date and able to understand local conversations and references. To this end, I set a series

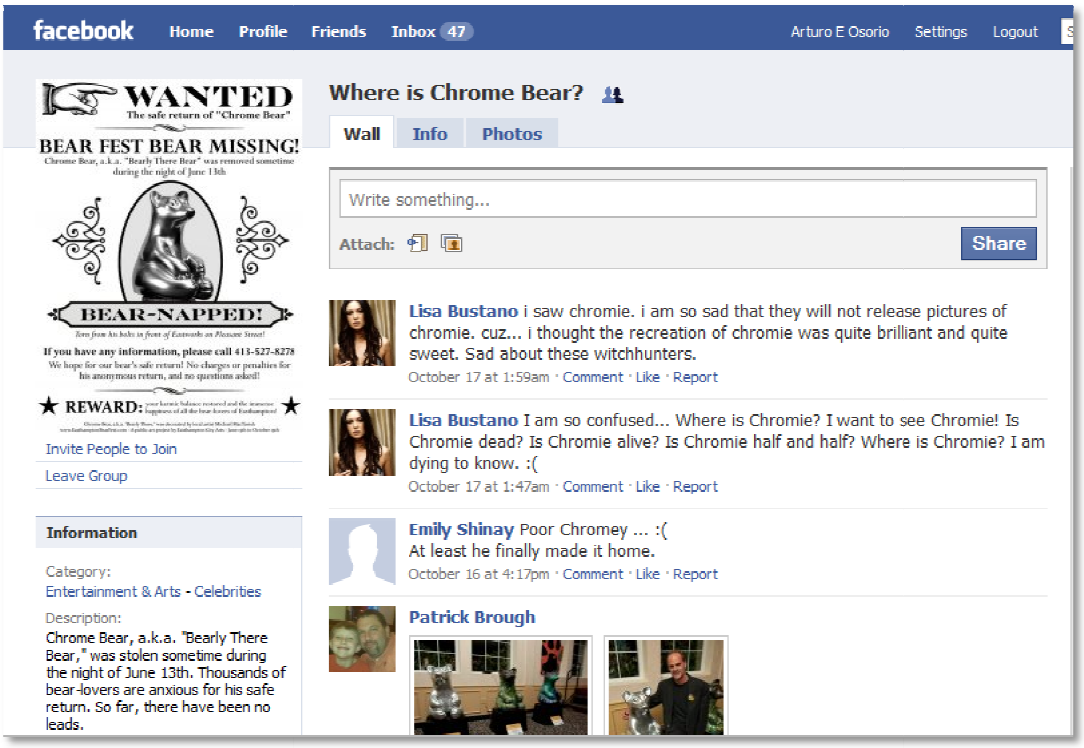
of web crawlers to retrieve daily news on the area, searching by keywords, including the name of the organizations that I was observing, the name of the town and major ongoing projects. All the web hits were data logged and included as part of the project data set, as they served as context of the local events. For instance, at some point, the ECA provided a grant to paint a mural on one of the buildings in town. While the process was transparent and did not bring much attention at first, it was the news coverage of it that made it more relevant and made people in town aware of it.

Picture 31: Mural on Cottage Street, across from the old theatre on the side of Whiskerz Pub.

The mural was funded by Easthampton City Arts with the support of the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Also sponsored by The Williston Northampton School and Hampton Wholesale Auto, LLC.

A particularly important event in town was the 2009 Bear Fest (http://easthamptonbearfest.com). Seeded as a casual conversation at one of the ECC meetings it became a joined effort between the ECC and ECA. At the end it evolved to become the main annual event in Easthampton in 2009. This event was similar to the

cow parade (www.cowparade.com) that has been taken place around the world. However, this Bear Fest displayed fiberglass bears in the premises of the town, rather than cows. As the project evolved logistical problems and personality clashes emerged. These are to be expected when this kind of project is undertaken. However, what it was not foreseen was that after the bears were put on display around town, one of the bears, the "Chrome Bear," was stolen. While the theft was not reported in the news until the next day, through my web crawler and Facebook links, I learned about the theft almost in real time.



Picture 32: FaceBook Page for Chrome Bear (a.k.a. Bearly there) Bear-napped

Likewise, I became aware of all the internal measures that were undertaken and how the problems were addressed before they became public knowledge. This information proved to be useful as I later talked to people from the ECC and ECA

involved in the Bear Fest. Their conversation revolved around the "bear-napping" issues that were not of the public domain.

APPENDIX C

DATA SOURCES AND DATA ARCHIVAL METHODS

	Web	Hard Copy	Digital Copy	Email	Recorded
Easthampton Demographics					
US census data					
State of Massachusetts	X	X	X		
The Massachusetts Northeast region	X	X	X		
The town of Easthampton Street List of Residents 2000-2007		X			
The town of Easthampton Street List of Residents 2008		X	X		
Easthampton Chamber of Commerce					
Membership records 1980-2008	X	X	X		
General Data					
Easthampton's official webpage	X		X		
Easthampton Public Schools	X		X		
Greater Easthampton Chamber of Commerce	X		X		
Art Related Data					
One Cottage Street Arts Community	X	X	X		
Eastworks	X	X	X		
Paragon Building	X	X	X		
PACE	X	X	X		
Riverside Industries	X	X	X		
Arts Easthampton webpage	X	X	X		
Easthampton City Arts	X	X	X	X	
Easthampton in the News					
Newspapers					
Boston Globe,	X	X	X		
New York Times	X	X	X		
The Republican	X	X	X		
Daily Hampshire Gazette	X	X	X		
TV / Cable					
Local TV Chanel		X	X		
Handouts & Brochures					
Artisans' events	X	X	X		
Web & Social Media					
Facebook	X		X	X	MP3 / Stream video
Link Inn	X		X	X	
Events' web pages and press releases	X		X	X	
Google Statistics & Google Labs	X		X	X	

Official Record Keep

Minutes

The ArtsEasthworks			X	X	
The ArtsWalk	X	X	X	X	MP3
The Bear Fest	X	X	X	X	MP3
The Arts Charrette	X	X	X	X	MP3
Easthampton City Arts (ECA)	X	X	X	X	MP3
Easthampton Cultural Council (ECC)	X	X	X	X	MP3
Easthampton Master Plan Executive Committee (EMPEC)	X	X	X	X	MP3 / DVD
Easthampton Master Plan Open Spaces & Art Committee (EMPOAC)	X	X	X	X	MP3 / DVD
Open Studios		X	X	X	MP3
The Windows Project (WP)	X	X	X	X	MP3
The Town Hall Conversion Project		X	X	X	MP3

APPENDIX D

DATA COLLECTION DATES AND PROCEDURES

	Period	Ethnographic	Interview	Archival
The ArtsEasthworks				
Monthly Artisans meetings	2005-2009	X		X
The Windows Project (WP)				
Windows Project Planning	2005-2006	X		X
The ArtsWalk				
Monthly Events	2006-2009	X	X	X
Open Studios				
Open Studios Winter Event	2004-2008	X	X	X
Open Studios Summer Event	2005-2009	X		X
The Arts Charrette				
Planning the Artisan Charrette	2005	X	X	X
Artisan Charrette Event	2005	X		X
Easthampton City Arts (ECA)				
Monthly Meetings	2005-2009	X		X
Easthampton Cultural Council (ECC)				
Monthly Meetings	2004-2009	X	X	X
Cultural Conversations (ECA-ECC)				
Quarterly Meetings	2007-2008	X	X	X
Bear Fest				
Meetings	2005-2009	X	X	X
Bear Fest Festival	2009	X	X	X
Easthampton Master Plan Executive Committee (EMPEC)				
Monthly Meetings	2006-2008	X		X
Kick-off and Open house	2006	X		X
Closing- and Open house	2008	X		X
Easthampton Master Plan Open Spaces & Art Committee (EMPOAC)				
Monthly Meetings	2006-2007	X		X
Riverside Industries				
Rehabilitation services	1968-2004		X	X
Rehabilitation services	2004-2009	X	X	X
Tucson & Savannah's Restaurant	1978-2009	X		X
Riverside Arts	2006-2009	X	X	X
ArtsEasthampton				
Annual Sales and Artists & Artisans Meetings	2004-2005	X	X	X
The Town Hall Conversion Project				
Planning Board Town Hall project	2006	X		X
Kick-off and Open house	2007	X		X

FlyWheel					
	Monthly Meetings	2004-2008		X	X
	Town Hall Project	2007-2008	X	X	X
PACE					
	Monthly Meetings	2004-2008			X
	New Building Project	2007-2008		X	X
The Daughters of Dada					
	Gatherings	2006-2007		X	X

APPENDIX E

COMPOSITION AND GOALS OF THE ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDED IN THIS STUDY

	Organization	Started	Year Added
1	NAME: FlyWheel NATURE: Grassroots OBJECTIVE: A collectively run, not-for-profit space, aimed at building a community and providing artists with the opportunity to craft, practice, and perform their work in an environment where creativity was valued over profits PARTICIPANTS: Board: 2 artists & 10 non-artists Volunteers: 2 artists & 25 non-artists	1998	2005
2	NAME: Pioneer Arts Center of Easthampton (PACE) NATURE: Non-profit OBJECTIVE: Community performance space promoting community and self-expression through the arts PARTICIPANTS: Board: 3 artists & 12 non-artists	2002	2005
3	NAME: Open Studios One Cottage Street NATURE: Grassroots OBJECTIVE: Open Studio Sales where participants exhibit (and offer for sale) a range of fine arts and crafts, including glass, jewelry, paintings, pottery, sculpture, home-furnishings, fine furniture, and photography—all created in Hampshire County PARTICIPANTS: Artists: Range from 30 to over 100	1987	2005
4	NAME: The Arts Easthworks NATURE: Grassroots OBJECTIVE: Working and living studio spaces with common areas used by tenants and friends as a place to exhibit (and sell) arts and crafts PARTICIPANTS: Ranged from 6 artists to over 20	1997	2005
5	NAME: The Windows Project (WP) NATURE: Grassroots / Governmental OBJECTIVE: Locations all over Easthampton, hosted a once a year free visual, music and performing art event to display local, regional and national talent . Participant artists and artisans may be contacted for purchases or hiring PARTICIPANTS: Ranged from 12 events with 15 artists to over 20 events with over 30 artists	2005	2005

	Organization	Started	Year Added
6	NAME: Nashawannuck gallery NATURE: Profit OBJECTIVE: To support and enhance arts and culture in Easthampton PARTICIPANTS: 1 to 6 artists per exhibit & 1 non-artist	1994	2005
7	NAME: Easthampton City Arts (ECA) NATURE: Non for profit OBJECTIVE: To support and enhance arts and culture in Easthampton to improve economic opportunities for artists and cultural establishments, while increasing the role that cultural activity plays in the revitalization of the community PARTICIPANTS: 6 artists & 1 non-artist	2005	2005
8	NAME: Easthampton Cultural Council (ECC) NATURE: Governmental OBJECTIVE: State agency that funds activities to promote excellence, access, education and diversity in the arts, humanities, and interpretive sciences; to improve the quality of life for all local residents and contribute to the economic vitality of our communities PARTICIPANTS: 9 to 12 artists		2005
9	NAME: The ArtsWalk NATURE: Grassroots OBJECTIVE: Locations all over Easthampton host a once a month free visual, music and performing art event to display local, regional and national talent. Participant artists and artisans may be contacted for purchases or hiring PARTICIPANTS: Ranged from 12 events with 15 artists to over 20 events with over 30 artists	2006	2006
10	NAME: Easthampton Master Plan Executive Committee (EMPEC) NATURE: Governmental / Grassroots OBJECTIVE: A community informed plan for the future – a plan to address how the community will change and grow until 2026 PARTICIPANTS: 2 artists & 7 non-artists	2006	2006

	Organization	Started	Year Added
11	NAME: Easthampton Master Plan Open Spaces & Art Committee (EMPOAC) NATURE: Government / Grassroots OBJECTIVE: A community informed plan to address how the Open Spaces and the Arts will change and grow until 2026 PARTICIPANTS: 4 artists & 6 non-artists	2006	2006
12	NAME: The Arts Charrette NATURE: Government OBJECTIVE: A community informed plan to assess how the community will address the growing participation of the arts PARTICIPANTS: Planning membership ranged from 4 artists & 1-non artist to 15 artists & 15 non-artists	2006	2006
13	NAME: The Town Hall Conversion Project NATURE: Grassroots / Governmental OBJECTIVE: Official meetings to direct and manage the transformation and privatization of the former town hall PARTICIPANTS: 2 artists & 5 non-artists	2006	2006
14	NAME: The Daughters of Dada NATURE: Grassroots OBJECTIVE: Art Discussions to foster the exchange of ideas and the development of cooperative projects PARTICIPANTS: Ranged from 3 artists to 7 artists	2006	2006
15	NAME: Cultural Conversations (ECA-ECC) NATURE: Non for profit / governmental OBJECTIVE: Discussions between the ECA and ECC to integrate activities and coordinate efforts PARTICIPANTS: ECA: 6 artists & 1 non-artist; ECC: 3 artists	2007	2007
16	NAME: Art Therapy NATURE: Non for profit OBJECTIVE: To provide art as a means to help people with disabilities PARTICIPANTS: Ranged from 3 to 6 artists non disable artists & 7 to 15 people with disabilities practicing art	2006	2007
17	NAME: Elusie gallery NATURE: Profit OBJECTIVE: To support and enhance arts and culture in Easthampton PARTICIPANTS: 1 to 6 artists per exhibit & 1 non-artist	2007	2007

	Organization	Started	Year Added
18	NAME: Bear Fest NATURE: Non for profit OBJECTIVE: To support and enhance arts and culture in Easthampton PARTICIPANTS: 9 artists & 1 non-artist	2007	2007

The "Started" column corresponds to the date formal meetings and activities began. The "Year Added" column corresponds to the year in which each organization was added to this project.

APPENDIX F

CODING OF ORGANIZATIONS INTO DOMAINS

Advocacy Groups	**18**
Advocacy Groups	18
Art	**496**
Art Activity	53
Art Support	1
Arts Center	2
Studio	440
City Governance	**30**
Board of Education	1
City Council	1
City Governance	26
Licensing Board	1
Local Access Board / Easthampton TV	1
Civic Organizations	**62**
Civic Organizations	62
Disability Svc	**6**
Disability/Rehabilitation Services	6
Education	**37**
Day Care/Adult/Child	17
Educational Services	12
Elementary School	3
High School	2
Middle School	1
University	2
Government	**24**
Assessor	1
Auditor's Office	1
Building Inspector's Office	1
Cemetery	1
City Clerk's Office	1
Department of Animal Control	1
Easthampton Post Office	1
Fire Department	1
Health Department	1
Justice of the Peace	1
Mayor's Office	1
Office Massachusetts Congressman John W. Oliver	1
Office Massachusetts State Senator	1
Parks and Recreation	1

Personnel Department	1
Police Department	1
Registrar of Voters	1
Retirement	1
School Department	1
State Representative	1
Systems Administrator	1
Tax Collector	1
Treasurer	1
Veterans' Agent	1
Health	**39**
Health Services	39
Manufacture	**21**
Manufacturer	21
Master Plan Committee	**1**
Master Plan Committee	1
Retail	**71**
Auto Sales/Parts/Repair	8
Building Supplies	7
Retail Art	15
Retail Stores / Convenience	41
Services	**244**
Accounting/Bizz Consulting	13
Advertising/Marketing	10
B&B / Hotels	2
Community / Development Services	2
Contractors/Construction/Remodeling	56
Decorative Arts/Interiors	6
Financial / Insurance / Investment Services	23
Funeral Homes / Supplies	4
Graphic Design	13
Home / Bizz Services & Supplies	29
Legal Services / Attorney	11
Personal Appearance	8
Pet Services	5
Pubs / Taverns / Restaurant	20
Realtor / Rentals	22
Software / Web design	15
Transportation	5
Grand Total	**1049**

APPENDIX G

QUESTIONS AT EACH DOMAIN OF INTEREST

Network / Link Characteristics		Domain of Interest		Source
		Business	Arts / Lifestyle	
Trust	Emotional Support	He / She makes me feel loved / respected / admired I can confide in this person He / She supports my actions		Adapted from: Norbeck Social Support Questionnaire and theoretically framed under Mayer, et al, (1995)
	Material Support	I can use his/her equipment / materials if I need to I can use his/her working space if I need to		
	Information / Advice	His / Her advice has my interests at heart His / Her opinion is unbiased		
	Aid	He /She is available for immediate help (e.g., helps me to move stuff around) He /She is available to provide long term help (e.g. takes care of my home when I'm out of town) He / She is my emergency contact		
Affinity	Emotional	We share values / perspectives We are equally concerned about the same issues He / She "gets me"		Theoretically based on: Levin, (2007) Ruyu & Kuperman, (2007)
	Social	We hang out with the same crowd We often run into each other at clubs and meetings We have the same priorities		
Homophily	Status	Similar: Education, age, gender, race, relationship status, income, occupation, artist / artisan		Theoretically based on: Marsden, (1990), Lazarsfeld & Merton (1954); McPherson, et al (2001)
	Value	Similar: Religion, Political Party, Friendship, Artist / Artisan		Theoretically based on:
Heterophily	Status	Different: Education, age, gender, race, relationship status, income, occupation, artist / artisan		Assumes premises opposite to Homophily but not as part of the same continuum
	Value	Different: Religion, Political Party, Friendship, Artist / Artisan		
Propinquity	Perceived	He / She "is down the hall" He / She is "a phone call away"		Theoretically based on: McPherson, et al. (2001)

APPENDIX H

SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE

UMassAmherst
ISENBERG
SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

ALL ANSWERS ARE CONFIDENTIAL

Mapping Easthampton's Artist & Artisans Community Relationships

Dear Respondent,

As you may already know, for the past 3 years, I have been around town participating in many of the city's art related public events. I have been doing this as part of my research project which is focused on the emergence of an arts community in Easthampton. This questionnaire is part of this research's final phase, which will be greatly enhanced by your participation. I thank you in advance for your interest and voluntary contribution in this project. At the end of this project a $0.50 donation (up to a grand-total of $500.00) will be made for each completed questionnaire to your choice of one of the following organizations: Easthampton Cultural Council, Pascommuck Conservation Trust, Easthampton Councils on Aging, or Treehouse Foundation.

In regards to the project itself, there are currently many artists and artisans in the city of Easthampton. They are, in one way or another, engaged in relationships with members of the local community including other artists and artisans. Through this questionnaire, I seek to map and understand the nature and extent of all these relationships in the course of Easthampton's everyday life. To participate in this project, you just need to be a member of Easthampton's community by either living or working in town. If you are an artist or artisan but you neither work nor live in town yet you display your work in Easthampton or interact with the local community at any level you can participate too.

The questionnaire consists of three parts:

- **Part I: DEMOGRAPHICS** – asks some general information about you.
- **Part II: YOUR PRIORITIES IN LOCAL ACTIVITIES** – refers to how you prioritize your reasons for involvement with local activities.
- **Part III: YOUR EVERYDAY RELATIONSHIPS** – asks about your relationships with people who you contact or who contact you as part of your everyday life.

The questionnaire may take from 30 to 60 minutes to complete depending on how many people you list in Part III. **All information is confidential**. Furthermore, to ensure everyone's privacy all responses, including names, will be coded before entered in the database and results will only be presented as aggregates and not as reports on single participants. Additionally, if you do not feel comfortable answering a particular question you may decline to answer it and move on to the next one.

Once again, I appreciate very much your contribution to this questionnaire. The more information you provide the more that I will be able to understand what makes Easthampton a unique community.

Thank you very much for your help with this project!

Arturo E. Osorio
Ph.D. Candidate
University of Massachusetts
Isenberg School of Management

Part I: DEMOGRAPHICS

This section is designed to better understand who you are and will serve to draw a broad picture of who is part (or not) of Easthampton's art & artisan scene. **This information, and all other information in this questionnaire, is confidential and will only be used in the context of this project**.

Telling me about you:

Name: First Name MI Last Name (Q0001)

Birth place (Town/state; Country if outside of the US): (Q0002)

Your Age (Q0003)

0-10 11-20 21-30 31-40 41-50

51-60 61-70 71-80 81-90 91 –up

Formal Education (please, select all that apply):

Liberal Arts:	Tech Degree	Bachelors	MFA	PhD/DLA	(Q0004-07)
Social Science:	Tech Degree	Bachelors	MS	PhD	(Q0008-11)
Comp Sci/S'ware:	Tech Degree	Bachelors	MS	PhD	(Q0012-15)
Life Science:	Tech Degree	Bachelors	MS	PhD/DNS	(Q0016-19)
Business:	Tech Degree	Bachelors	MBA	PhD/DBA	(Q0020-23)
Other:	Tech Degree	Bachelors	Masters	PhD	(Q0024-27)

if "Other" selected, please specify: (Q0028)

Decline to answer (Q0029)

Relationship Status: (Q0030)

Married Domestic Partner Widowed

Single Divorced/Separated

Other (please specify) (Q0031)

Decline to answer (Q0032)

Gender:

Female Male (Q0033)

Other (please specify) Decline to answer (Q0034-35)

Race (please, select all that apply):

Amer. Indian/Alaskan Native White (not Hispanic) Hispanic/Latino (Q0037-38)

Asian Amer./Pacific Islander African Amer./Black (Q0039-40)

Other (please specify) Decline to answer (Q0041-42)

 If you need extra space please use the back→

Are you politically active? (e.g., do you vote regularly?): (Q0043)

Yes: ☐ No: ☐ Decline to answer ☐

If YES, in which level (please, select all that apply): (Q0044-47)

Local ☐ State ☐ National ☐ Decline to answer ☐

Are you active in any religious faith? (e.g., do you attend to religious services regularly): (Q0048)

Yes: ☐ No: ☐ Decline to answer ☐

Approximately, what is your personal annual income? (Q0049)

0 - 20,000 ☐	20,001 - 40,000 ☐	40,001- 60,000 ☐
60,001- 80,000 ☐	80,001-100,000 ☐	100,001-120,000 ☐
120,001-130,000 ☐	130,001-140,000 ☐	140,001 & Above ☐
Decline to answer ☐		

What is your current Zip Code at each one of the following locations, and since when? Additionally, how far away did you come to each one of these locations (i.e., former ZIP code)?

	Current ZIP Code		**Former ZIP Code**	
Home address	☐	Since ☐ yrs ago	☐	(Q050-52)
Work address	☐	Since ☐ yrs ago	☐	(Q053-55)
Your Art studio's address	☐	Since ☐ yrs ago	☐	(Q056-58)

Your relationship to the arts

Are you an artist/artisan (even if it is not your livelihood)? (Q0059)

Yes ☐ No ☐

If YES, since when? (Q0060)

☐ yrs ago

If you are an artist/artisan, what is your domain? (Q0061)

Whether you are an artist / artisan or not…

…on average, what percentage of your monthly income do you estimate come directly from your personal involvement in art related activities? (Q0062)

0 - 20% ☐ 21-40% ☐ 41-60% ☐ 61-80% ☐ 81-100% ☐

…on average, how many hours a week do you devote to art related activities? (Q0063)

☐ hrs /week

 If you need extra space please use the back→

Part II: YOUR PRIORITIES IN LOCAL ACTIVITIES

Everyone spending time regularly in Easthampton –whether they live here or not– has a different reason for being a part of the local community. In a very broad and generic sense, these reasons can fall into three main categories: **Business**, **Arts** and **Lifestyle**. In this part, I would like to learn in which ways you see yourself as part of the Easthampton community. . For this purpose, please consider the following:

In the context of your everyday life in Easthampton, please rank as #1, # 2 and # 3 the categories of activity listed in the table below according to your priorities as part of this community (**# 1 would be the most important category for you and # 3 would be the least important**). After ranking all three categories, please use the column on the right to explain why you ranked them as you did.

Activity	Rank	Reasons
Business	_____	(Q0064-65)
Arts	_____	(Q0066-67)
Lifestyle	_____	(Q0068-69)

 If you need extra space please use the back→

Part III: YOUR EVERYDAY RELATIONSHIPS

Instructions

The goal of this section is to explore the nature and extent of your day-to-day relationships with other members of the Easthampton community. To this end, this section asks six different questions. These questions require you to provide names of individuals who you consider best match the premises of each question. Probably some names will be repeated in all (or almost all) six questions, while other names may only show up one time. Both instances are OK. When answering these questions please keep in mind that I am not looking for an exhaustive list of all the people you know. What I am looking for is a fair and current representation of the people that you have talked with regularly and consistently in the context of business, art, or lifestyle during the past 12 months.

To answer these questions you will write only the name of one person per page. Once you have no more names to add to a particular question, please advance to the next one. Keep doing this until you have completed all six questions.

The rationale for focusing on only one name per page is to provide you with the space to explain your overall reasons to include that person as an important relationship in your everyday life in Easthampton. To describe your relationship with each person and right after the space for the person's name, every page includes a series of generic statements where you will select the degree of your relationship with that particular person in the context of the question at hand (e.g., the reasons why you sought him/her out, or why he/she sought you out as indicated in the question). For this purpose, each statement on the page is followed by a scale ranging from 1 to 5 **(where 1= "Strongly disagree" and 5= "Strongly agree")**. Please, read each statement carefully to ensure that your selection describes well the nature and /or strength of your relationship with the person of reference at the top of each page.

Note: please be aware that some questions may seem similar to others, but they are not identical. Some pages ask about **your relationship with the person** whose name you have written (You → Other), while other pages ask about **the relationship of that person with you** (Other → You).

 If you need extra space please use the back→

Question # 1

Your Business Activities

(You → Other)

Looking back over the past 12 months, to whom did you talk regularly and consistently in relation to your own personal Business Activities (other than members of your household)?

To answer this question, on the following pages please:

i. Write the names of those persons –one name per page, please.
ii. Indicate if those persons are an artists / artisans, business persons, or both.
iii. Rank the strength of your relationship with each person.
iv. Rank the statements describing your relationship with each person.

 If you need extra space please use the back→

Q001C001

i. Who did you seek out to talk in the context of your own Business Activities ? (Q0070)

Name: _____ _____ _____

First Name MI Last Name

ii. Indicate, on a scale from 1 to 5, where **1 = "just an acquaintance" and 5 = "very close friend",** the strength of your relationship with this person:

1	2	3	4	5
"just an acquaintance"				**"very close friend"**

(Q0071)

iii. Is he or she…

…an artist / artisan?	**Y** ___ **N** ___	(Q0072)
…a business person?	**Y** ___ **N** ___	(Q0073)
…an artist / artisan AND a business person?	**Y** ___ **N** ___	(Q0074)

iv. I sought out this person because …

	Rank on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1= "Strongly disagree" and 5= "Strongly agree", the following statements as the reasons for you to contact this person in the past 12 months						
a)	He / She makes me feel loved / respected / admired	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0075)
b)	I can confide in this person	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0076)
c)	He / She supports my actions	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0077)
d)	I can use his / her equipment / materials if I need to	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0078)
e)	I can use his / her working space if I need to	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0079)
f)	His / Her advice has my interests at heart	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0080)
g)	His / Her opinion is unbiased	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0081)
h)	He / She is available for immediate help	1	2	3	4	5	(Q00782)
i)	He / She is available to provide long term help	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0083)
j)	He/she is my emergency contact	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0084)
k)	We share values / perspectives	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0085)
l)	We are equally concerned about the same issues	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0086)
m)	He / She "gets me"	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0087)
n)	We hang out with the same crowd	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0088)
o)	We often run into each other at clubs and meetings	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0089)
p)	We have the same priorities	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0090)
q)	He / She "is down the hall"	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0091)
r)	He / She is "a phone call away"	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0092)

If you need extra space please use the back→

Question # 2

Others' Business Activities

(Other → You)

Looking back over the past 12 months, who regularly and consistently, sought you out to talk with you in relation to his / her own personal Business Activities (other than members of your household)?

To answer this question, on the following pages, please:

i. Write the names of those persons – –one name per page, please.
ii. Indicate if those persons are an artists / artisans, business persons, or both.
iii. Rank the strength of your relationship with each person.
iv. Rank the statements describing your relationship with each person.

 If you need extra space please use the back→

Q002C001

i. Who sought you out to talk in the context of his / her own Business Activities ? (Q0093)

Name: _____ _____ _____

First Name MI Last Name

ii. Indicate, on a scale from 1 to 5, where **1 = "just an acquaintance" and 5 = "very close friend",** the strength of your relationship with this person:

1	2	3	4	5
"just an acquaintance"				**"very close friend"**

(Q0094)

iii. Is he or she…

…an artist / artisan?	**Y** ___ **N** ___	(Q0095)
…a business person?	**Y** ___ **N** ___	(Q0096)
…an artist / artisan AND a business person?	**Y** ___ **N** ___	(Q0097)

iv. He / she sought me out because …

	Rank on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1= "Strongly disagree" and 5= "Strongly agree", the following statements as the reasons for him / her to contact you in the past 12 months						
a)	I make him / her feel loved / respected / admired	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0098)
b)	He / She can confide in me	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0099)
c)	I support his / her actions	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0100)
d)	He / she can use my equipment / materials if he / she needs to	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0101)
e)	He / she can use my working space if he / she needs to	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0102)
f)	My advice has his / her interests at heart	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0103)
g)	My opinion is unbiased	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0104)
h)	I am available for immediate help	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0105)
i)	I am available to provide long term help	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0106)
j)	I am his / her emergency contact	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0107)
k)	We share values / perspectives	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0108)
l)	We are equally concerned about the same issues	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0109)
m)	I "get him / her"	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0110)
n)	We hang out with the same crowd	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0111)
o)	We often run into each other at clubs and meetings	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0112)
p)	We have the same priorities	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0113)
q)	I am "down the hall"	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0114)
r)	I am "a phone call away"	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0115)

If you need extra space please use the back→

Question # 3

Your Art Activities

(You → Other)

Looking back over the past 12 months, to whom did you talk regularly and consistently in relation to your own personal Art Activities (other than members of your household)?

To answer this question, on the following pages, please:

i. Write the names of those persons – –one name per page, please.
ii. Indicate if those persons are an artists / artisans, business persons, or both.
iii. Rank the strength of your relationship with each person.
iv. Rank the statements describing your relationship with each person.

 If you need extra space please use the back→

Q003C001

i. Who did you seek out to talk in the context of your own Art Activities ? (Q0116)

Name: _____ _____ _____

First Name MI Last Name

ii. Indicate, on a scale from 1 to 5, where **1 = "just an acquaintance" and 5 = "very close friend",** the strength of your relationship with this person:

1	2	3	4	5
"just an acquaintance"				**"very close friend"**

(Q0117)

iii. Is he or she…

…an artist / artisan?	**Y** ___ **N** ___	(Q0118)
…a business person?	**Y** ___ **N** ___	(Q0119)
…an artist / artisan AND a business person?	**Y** ___ **N** ___	(Q0120)

iv. I sought out this person because …

	Rank on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1= "Strongly disagree" and 5= "Strongly agree", the following statements as the reasons for you to contact this person in the past 12 months						
a)	He / She makes me feel loved / respected / admired	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0121)
b)	I can confide in this person	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0122)
c)	He / She supports my actions	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0123)
d)	I can use his / her equipment / materials if I need to	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0124)
e)	I can use his / her working space if I need to	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0125)
f)	His / Her advice has my interests at heart	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0126)
g)	His / Her opinion is unbiased	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0127)
h)	He / She is available for immediate help	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0128)
i)	He / She is available to provide long term help	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0129)
j)	He/she is my emergency contact	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0130)
k)	We share values / perspectives	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0131)
l)	We are equally concerned about the same issues	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0132)
m)	He / She "gets me"	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0133)
n)	We hang out with the same crowd	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0134)
o)	We often run into each other at clubs and meetings	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0135)
p)	We have the same priorities	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0136)
q)	He / She "is down the hall"	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0137)
r)	He / She is "a phone call away"	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0138)

If you need extra space please use the back→

Question # 4

Others' Art Activities

(Other → You)

Looking back over the past 12 months, who regularly and consistently sought you out to talk with you in relation to his / her own personal Art Activities (other than members of your household)?

To answer this question, on the following pages, please:

i. Write the names of those persons – –one name per page, please.
ii. Indicate if those persons are an artists / artisans, business persons, or both.
iii. Rank the strength of your relationship with each person.
iv. Rank the statements describing your relationship with each person.

 If you need extra space please use the back→

Q004C001

i. Who sought you out to talk in the context of his / her own Art Activities ? (Q0139)

Name: _____ _____ _____

First Name MI Last Name

ii. Indicate, on a scale from 1 to 5, where **1 = "just an acquaintance" and 5 = "very close friend",** the strength of your relationship with this person:

1	2	3	4	5
"just an acquaintance"				**"very close friend"**

(Q0140)

iii. Is he or she…

…an artist / artisan?	**Y** ___ **N** ___	(Q0141)
…a business person?	**Y** ___ **N** ___	(Q0142)
…an artist / artisan AND a business person?	**Y** ___ **N** ___	(Q0143)

iv. He / she sought me out because …

	Rank on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1= "Strongly disagree" and 5= "Strongly agree", the following statements as the reasons for him / her to contact you in the past 12 months						
a)	I make him / her feel loved / respected / admired	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0144)
b)	He / She can confide in me	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0145)
c)	I support his / her actions	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0146)
d)	He / she can use my equipment / materials if he / she needs to	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0147)
e)	He / she can use my working space if he / she needs to	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0148)
f)	My advice has his / her interests at heart	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0149)
g)	My opinion is unbiased	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0150)
h)	I am available for immediate help	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0151)
i)	I am available to provide long term help	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0152)
j)	I am his / her emergency contact	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0153)
k)	We share values / perspectives	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0154)
l)	We are equally concerned about the same issues	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0155)
m)	I "get him / her"	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0156)
n)	We hang out with the same crowd	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0157)
o)	We often run into each other at clubs and meetings	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0158)
p)	We have the same priorities	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0159)
q)	I am "down the hall"	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0160)
r)	I am "a phone call away"	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0161)

If you need extra space please use the back→

Question # 5

Your Lifestyle Activities

(You → Other)

Looking back over the past 12 months, to whom did you talk regularly and consistently in relation to your own personal Lifestyle Activities (other than members of your household)?

To answer this question, on the following pages, please:

i. Write the names of those persons – –one name per page, please.
ii. Indicate if those persons are an artists / artisans, business persons, or both.
iii. Rank the strength of your relationship with each person.
iv. Rank the statements describing your relationship with each person.

 If you need extra space please use the back→

Q005C001

i. Who did you seek out to talk in the context of your own Lifestyle Activities ? (Q0162)

Name: _____ _____ _____

First Name MI Last Name

ii. Indicate, on a scale from 1 to 5, where **1 = "just an acquaintance" and 5 = "very close friend",** the strength of your relationship with this person:

1	2	3	4	5
"just an acquaintance"				**"very close friend"**

(Q0163)

iii. Is he or she…

…an artist / artisan?	**Y** ___ **N** ___	(Q0164)
…a business person?	**Y** ___ **N** ___	(Q0165)
…an artist / artisan AND a business person?	**Y** ___ **N** ___	(Q0166)

iv. I sought out this person because …

	Rank on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1= "Strongly disagree" and 5= "Strongly agree", the following statements as the reasons for you to contact this person in the past 12 months						
a)	He / She makes me feel loved / respected / admired	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0167)
b)	I can confide in this person	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0168)
c)	He / She supports my actions	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0169)
d)	I can use his / her equipment / materials if I need to	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0170)
e)	I can use his / her working space if I need to	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0171)
f)	His / Her advice has my interests at heart	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0172)
g)	His / Her opinion is unbiased	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0173)
h)	He / She is available for immediate help	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0174)
i)	He / She is available to provide long term help	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0175)
j)	He/she is my emergency contact	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0176)
k)	We share values / perspectives	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0177)
l)	We are equally concerned about the same issues	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0178)
m)	He / She "gets me"	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0179)
n)	We hang out with the same crowd	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0180)
o)	We often run into each other at clubs and meetings	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0181)
p)	We have the same priorities	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0182)
q)	He / She "is down the hall"	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0183)
r)	He / She is "a phone call away"	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0184)

If you need extra space please use the back→

Question # 6

Others' Lifestyle Activities

(Other → You)

Looking back over the past 12 months, who regularly and consistently sought you out to talk with you in relation to his / her own personal Lifestyle Activities (other than members of your household)?

To answer this question, on the following pages, please:

i. Write the names of those persons – –one name per page, please.
ii. Indicate if those persons are an artists / artisans, business persons, or both.
iii. Rank the strength of your relationship with each person.
iv. Rank the statements describing your relationship with each person.

 If you need extra space please use the back→

Q006C001

i. Who sought you out to talk in the context of his / her own Lifestyle Activities ? (Q0185)

Name: _____ _____ _____

First Name MI Last Name

ii. Indicate, on a scale from 1 to 5, where **1 = "just an acquaintance" and 5 = "very close friend",** the strength of your relationship with this person:

1	2	3	4	5
"just an acquaintance"				**"very close friend"**

(Q0186)

iii. Is he or she…

…an artist / artisan?	**Y** ___ **N** ___	(Q0187)
…a business person?	**Y** ___ **N** ___	(Q0188)
…an artist / artisan AND a business person?	**Y** ___ **N** ___	(Q0189)

iv. He / she sought me out because …

	Rank on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1= "Strongly disagree" and 5= "Strongly agree", the following statements as the reasons for him / her to contact you in the past 12 months						
a)	I make him / her feel loved / respected / admired	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0190)
b)	He / She can confide in me	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0191)
c)	I support his / her actions	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0192)
d)	He / she can use my equipment / materials if he / she needs to	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0193)
e)	He / she can use my working space if he / she needs to	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0194)
f)	My advice has his / her interests at heart	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0195)
g)	My opinion is unbiased	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0196)
h)	I am available for immediate help	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0197)
i)	I am available to provide long term help	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0198)
j)	I am his / her emergency contact	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0199)
k)	We share values / perspectives	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0200)
l)	We are equally concerned about the same issues	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0201)
m)	I "get him / her"	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0202)
n)	We hang out with the same crowd	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0203)
o)	We often run into each other at clubs and meetings	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0204)
p)	We have the same priorities	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0205)
q)	I am "down the hall"	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0206)
r)	I am "a phone call away"	1	2	3	4	5	(Q0207)

If you need extra space please use the back→

Thanks!

The final goal of this project is for me to explore the nature and extent of the relationships of the members of Easthampton's artist and artisan community. Thus, I would like to ask you if, after answering these questions, you would agree to help me further to reach other people so I can have a better understanding of the city and what makes it unique.

You can help me further with this project if you are able to:

a) refer more people to me by having them contact me by any of these means (listed in order of preference):

email: arturo@resgs.umass.edu
phone: (413) 577-2207
mail: Arturo E. Osorio
University of Massachusetts
Isenberg School of Management
Room 231 SOM
Amherst, MA 01003

b) let me know about other people who may be willing to participate in this project so I can contact them directly.

Finally, if you have any questions or comments about these questions or the project in general, please do not hesitate to contact me via email or phone.

Thank you so much again!

Arturo E. Osorio
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University of Massachusetts
Isenberg School of Management

 If you need extra space please use the back→

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